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THE GUIDE TO COMICS • 67

MARCH 1997

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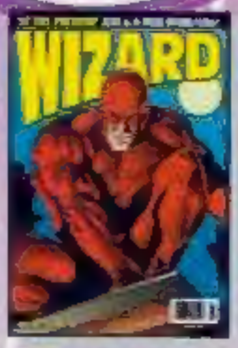

ON THE COVER
Daredevil was illustrated by Gary Nord and Matthew Ryan, and colored by Twilight Graphics. To learn Daredevil's life story, check out Page 34.

Thing/Iron Man was illustrated by Jim Lee and Tom McWeeney, and colored by WildStorm Colors/Twilight Graphics. Turn to Page 46 to find out what's in store for the second half of "Heroes Reborn."

standards

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Show us your tattoos and win a complete set of Fleer/Skyflix's new *X-Men* tattoo card set.

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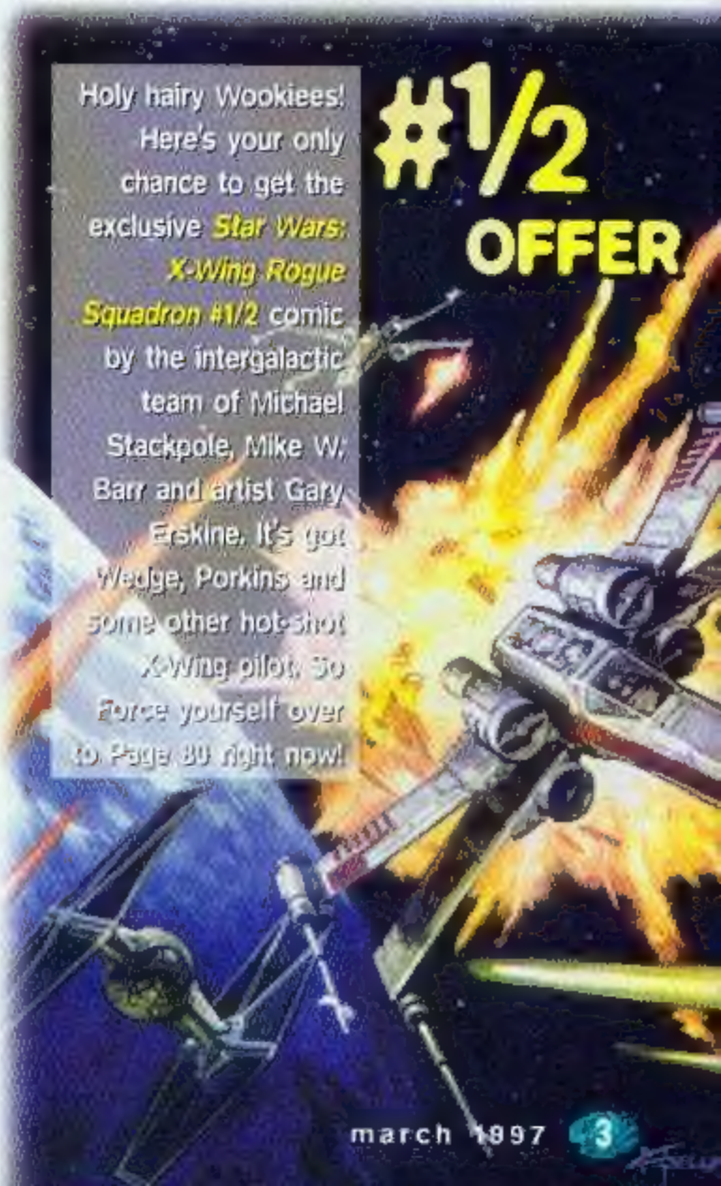
Draw a wacky dinosaur and *Tyrant* artist Stephen Bissette will draw an original dinosaur sketch of your choice for ya! (Ain't he swell?)

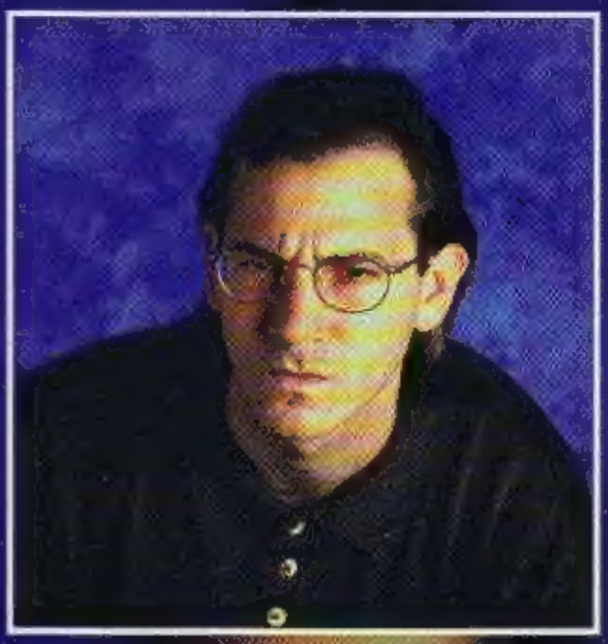
EXCLUSIVE



Holy hairy Wookiees! Here's your only chance to get the exclusive *Star Wars: X-Wing Rogue Squadron #1/2* comic by the intergalactic team of Michael Stackpole, Mike W. Barr and artist Gary Erskine. It's got Wedge, Porkins and some other hot-shot X-Wing pilots. So Force yourself over to Page 80 right now!

#1/2 OFFER

"WHATCHOO TALKIN' ABOUT, WILLIS?"



A SUPER CHANGE

Something I never dreamed could happen is happening. And I'm sure your initial response was just like mine was: "No way. They can't do that!" So I shrugged it off until I saw the new costume. "Oh, no!" was my reaction. I'm talking about Superman getting a new costume. Now there's two sides to how I feel when it comes to Supes' change of costume. From the marketing standpoint, I got over my fear of it real quick. From the standpoint of "How can they do that," the picture had to sit on my desk for about two weeks. I like it now—both sides of me.

I was just in L.A., and got to visit a place where I saw more toys than you can imagine—the Puzzle Zoo warehouse! I've been to the Toys R Us Superstores...but whoa! You just can't believe how many action figures are being sold—especially in Europe and Asia. This means one thing: another *Wizard* toy special—the second *ToyFare*—is coming out in April.

This month, we've got so many awesome things going on: a *Star Wars* #1/2 offer which is a "must" order, a Batman/Wildcat die-cut Chromium card and a huge Star Wars poster—not to mention great covers by Jim Lee (Iron Man/Thing) and Cary Nord (Daredevil). Check out our feature on what's happening with the second half of the "Heroes Reborn" project (issues #6-#12) and see what James Robinson has to say about *Starman*, *Leave it to Chance* and his sequel to *The Golden Age* in the *Wizard* Q&A.

Make sure to check out the upcoming specials from *Wizard*, including *Sci-Fi Invasion!* in February, a *JLA* special in March and our second *ToyFare* in April. DO NOT MISS THEM! OR I'LL...

See ya next month,

Gareb S. Shamus

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Daredevil Cover Art
Cary Nord and Matthew Ryan, colored by Twilight Graphics

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Stuff you don't ever read...

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MAGIC WORDS

Letters About Letters

One thing that tells me that we (that's you the letter writer and me the letter reader) are doing a good job is the fact that we get a lot of letters about letters here. We've had a lot of fun in the past with a few letters page controversies like the Iron Man vs. X-Men battle, the "Should Spider-Man have killed Carnage?" question and the ever-present debate over just how many licks it takes to get the Tootsie Roll center of a Tootsie Pop. (Once and for all, it's three! Three, hot dammit! Three!)

But most of those were in the old days. Now, I'm getting letters about tattoos (see last issue's fiasco for details), the pros and cons of the band Oasis, John Pading and his now-infamous "Dork Aptitude Test" and comic creator dream teams. I also got notification that "Ghastly" Graham Ingles, the amazing artist on several EC Comics horror titles of the 1950s who we briefly discussed in issue #64's "Magic Words," is deceased. He passed away on April 4, 1991. We lead this month off with several letters about letters.

So read on. There's a lot of interesting stuff here. We even address the nougat question this issue...

Dear Jim,

I have to agree with your answer to Dave Amiott's letter in *Wizard* #63 about which is better—comics or girls. Being a girl who reads comics, I must say we're a lot better. Maybe you can't get a jillion dollars for one of us (well, most of us) at an auction, but we're priceless anyway, aren't we? Maybe the question should be: Which is better—comics or guys?

True, comics are only two-dimensional, but they're still not as shallow as some guys I know. And comics don't constantly change the TV from one football game to another when they don't even really care who wins either of them. Also, comics don't forget to call, and I have a feeling that if comics were sentient, they could take a hint.

Of course, you can say equally bad or worse things about girls. Or comics, for that matter. The fact of the matter is that most people are good, but a small percentage are scum. Let's hope that Dave someday finds a nice girl that won't make him wonder if a non-lifeform is better than a woman.

Mary Jordan
103743.3060@CompuServe.com

Okay. Food for thought. A few clarifications, though: First, men care about who wins in ALL football games. Second, men are generally much more explicit than women. We tend to be more direct, and thus less receptive to hints. If you, or any women, go out of your way to be a bit more explicit and direct, I think you'll find that your relationships with men will improve. Your relationships with comics will probably improve for that matter, too.

Dear Wizard,

To answer your request in *Wizard* #63, here is my list of likes:

When someone compliments my haircut.

When I get mail without any bills.

When an issue of *Bone*, *Dawn* or *Madman* comes out. It's so long between issues!

When I find money in an old pair of jeans.

When my drive-thru order is right.

When my girlfriend sleeps in my shirt and leaves it smelling like her.

Most importantly, when the good guys win.

Dusty Dean
Hawkeye858@aol.com

Nice list. I particularly like the girlfriend-smell one. That smell on the pillow is very nice, too. However, methinks that if you're a typical comic fan, compliments on your haircut must be very few and far between.

Dear Jim,

I recently bought *Wizard* #64, and while

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The Shocks Continue in February

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reading "Magic Words," was interested to find a letter from one John Pading of Alameda, Calif. In this letter, Mr. Pading tells us that most readers of *Wizard* are dorks and gives a test to see how dorky we are. Mr. Pading also seems to believe that he is not dorky at all. After reading the test and taking it (I ended up a "dork"), I found a few flaws. The way I understand this test, Mr. Pading is rating people's dorkiness by the standards of his own life. I made a few corrections. Here is the revision:

The Official John Pading Dork Test: This is a test to see just how dorky John Pading is. John, add points where they apply, and subtract ones that apply and have a negative.

You wrote the Dork Aptitude Test found in *Wizard #64*: score 20 points

Your name is John Pading, and you are from Alameda, California: 175

You think that "Star Trek" is worthless: 10

You are human: -10

You hate *Wizard*: -20

You think you aren't a dork: 500

You think you have a girlfriend: 150

You don't like manga: 10

You are a smart-ass: 50

You have moshed: 40

You truly listen to alternative music: -20

You admit that you are truly a dork: -500

Scoring:

-550 through +1: You're okay, John.

+2 through +955: Ha, ha John. You ARE a dork!

There. I'm done.

Mike Ferrarella
Maspeth, NY

Boy, this Pading guy turned out to be one less-than-completely-popular fella. Sure, his list was rather on the arrogant side, but I think there was also an element of "it's all in good fun" to it. But everyone sure seems to have been riled up by it. Maybe it hits a little too close to home for some people...?

Dear Jim,

In *Wizard #63*, Greg Dennis asked if you were going to keep Wolvie the same or change him back. You said you'd keep him the same. What friggin' say do you have in the matter?

Peter Parker
Kelowna, B.C., Canada

What friggin' say do I have? Well, what friggin' say do you have? I mean, who the hell do you think you are, Peter Parker or something? The Amazing Friggin' Spider-Man?! What's that? You are Peter Parker? Oh, I guess you might have some say in it, then. Never mind. By the way, great job taking out the Hobgoblin last month. Stellar work.

Dear Jim,

Thank you for printing my letter in *Wizard #63*! I was so insane with happiness I ran up and down the stairs, then ran outside and around the block. The next day I went to school and showed all my friends and teachers my letter, and they were insane with jealousy. I went to my favorite comic shop and they said they would hang up my letter somewhere in the store. The whole city of San Leandro probably knows about my letter! There is widespread insanity all over the Bay Area!

Anyway, why did you print my letter? Was it because I typed it? Was it a good question? What were the chances of my letter getting printed?

Brian Danganan
San Leandro, CA

For those just tuning in, Brian wrote a letter asking about Marvel's "unstable molecules" and where Professor Xavier gets all his money.

To answer your questions, Bri, I ran the letter because it contained some good general questions that I thought our readers would enjoy knowing the answers to. When I get tired of smart-ass quips, I like to try doing a little bit of education 'round these parts. Typing helps, but by no means is it a necessity in getting a letter published. Your odds in getting published were about 150 to one, as we get about 3,000 letters a month and run about 20. Even though we get so many letters that there's no way we can respond to them all, rest assured that all letters are read, and many letters lead to direct changes every month in Wizard. And hey—see if you can keep it calm this time.

Dear Wizard,

I've heard that Daredevil's powers came from some radioactive gunk that took his eyesight and enhanced his other senses. I've also heard that Stick, that old ninja guy, trained Daredevil to enhance his senses naturally. Which is right?

Chad Wm. Porter
Weston, Ontario, Canada

Well, according to Daredevil Editor James Felder, "Matt Murdock was hit by a radioactive canister that blinded him and apparently heightened his senses.

Jim takes one of his favorite letters of the month and spotlights it here. There's no logic attached to this, nor is there a prize.

Hey, Chief,

By the way, nougat consists of peanut butter, salt, corn syrup and butter. Please print this so the world can know the answer to a puzzling problem that's plagued mankind for centuries.

Nick Thorburn
Campbell River, B.C., Canada
thorburn@oberon.ark.com

Uh, actually, according to the friendly folks at M&M/Mars customer service, nougat is made of a high-boiled syrup combined with a confection called frappe. Frappe is made by combining egg whites and soy protein. So there.

When Stick began training Matt, he claimed that the radioactivity was not the cause of Matt's heightened senses—that, in fact, every person has the capabilities inside them to foster such powers. DD's abilities seem to have developed in a three-step process: the canister blinding him, Stick's training him and Matt's natural aptitude to enhance his senses."

So I guess your answer is a little bit of both.

Hey, Wizard,

Has anyone else noticed that those nutty folks at Marvel are making Magneto, or "Joseph" as they're calling him these days, seem a heck of a lot like the "Age of Apocalypse" Magneto? Let's see

They both have that long hair look happening.

They're both interested in Rogue. The "AoA" Magneto even married her. And the "AoA" Magneto found a way for Rogue to control her powers. Joseph seems pretty darn close to that as well

They're both good guys.

If Marvel is planning on turning the "normal" Magneto into the "Age of Apocalypse" Magneto, all I can say is...do it. The "AoA" Magneto was the best Magnus I've seen in ages! And Joseph is well on his way to the top of my list of favorite characters!

Mark Campbell
Ark MarkX@aol.com

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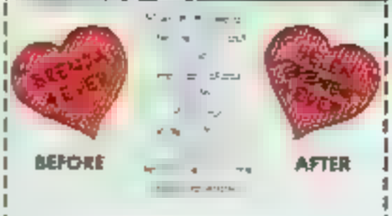

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According to Marvel Editor-in-Chief Bob Harras: "The 'Age of Apocalypse' Magneto belongs to another timeline, Mark. Our Magneto, or 'Joseph,' as he is now known, is obviously going through a lot of changes. But what happens with him and Rogue, only time will tell."

Dear Wizard,

I need advice on something kind of comic-related. Here's the story. I am a ninth grader and I have been in love with a girl since sixth grade. Anyway, I asked her out like six times, and she always said no. But the last time she said no, she threatened to kill me, called comics immature and wrote some mean

PENPALS

Allison Sly
Age [illegible] Male
[illegible]

Nick Cambright
Age [illegible] Male
Wordsworth, [illegible]
[illegible] X-Men, [illegible]
[illegible] X-Men 2099

Kyle Hays
Age [illegible] Male
2" [illegible]
Sayre, PA 18801
[illegible] Spider-Man
[illegible]

Jody Barnhart
Age [illegible] Male
[illegible] P.O.B. 664
[illegible]
Ohio [illegible]
Ohio: All X-Men, Spiders, [illegible]

Matt McIntyre
Age [illegible] Male
[illegible] Homestead Ave. West
P.O. Box 648
Clearwater, FL 34617-0648
Like: All X-Men, Wrecker, Zero, [illegible]

Randy Ford
Age [illegible] Male
[illegible] 4th Ave.
Tonasket, WA 98855-1913
Like: All Spider-Men, Hulk, [illegible]

Terran Riverside
Age 14 Sex Male
4 [illegible]
Goodlettsville, Sandy Hook,
Tennessee [illegible]
Like: The Simpsons, Spawn, The X-Files

notes and sent them to me. Being a well-liked guy, a bunch of people rushed to my defense by sending her hate notes in my name threatening her. That happened at the end of eighth grade and I thought I forgot about her over the summer. But when I saw her again a few days ago, I realized I still love her. I just don't know what to do. Should I apologize and ask her out again or apologize and try to be friends, like she always wanted? Or should I just forget it?

Mark McDermott
Cumberland, RI

Forget it. She may have called comics "immature" (which they can sometimes be), but sending "hate notes" is never a mature idea, especially if someone else is doing it for you. If you have something to say to someone, say it. Face to face, calmly, without getting nasty. These things have a way of working themselves out. Give it a rest. It's the best course.

By the way, since when did this column become "Advice to the Lovelorn"?

Dear Wizard,

I have all the regular issues of Image Comics' incredible *1963* series, but not the Annual. Was it ever published?

Kevin A. McIlwain
Munhall, PA
kam78@unix1.ccac.edu

Nope. The 1963 mini-series consisted of six incredibly cool retro-feel comics like* Mystery, Inc. *(a* Fantastic Four *knock-off) and* Horus, Lord of Light *(a character who bore an uncanny resemblance to the Mighty Thor). The series was supposed to climax in the 1963 Annual, with a story that brought the characters into the present day. But due to time constraints on the creators that were supposed to be involved, the 1963 Annual never came out. You can, however, expect to see the 1963 characters making background appearances in issues of* A Touch of Silver, *Jim Valentino's current Image Comics offering.

Dear Overactive Fanboys,

What the heck is a Marvel No-prize?

Max Wood
Jacksonville, FL

Nothing. According to Harry N. Abrams, author of* Marvel: Five Fabulous Decades of the World's Greatest Comics, *Marvel Big Kahuna Stan Lee started giving out the recognition of a "No-prize" for cool letters that made Marvel's lettercols in the mid-1960s. Later, specially designed empty No-prize envelopes, containing nothing, were mailed to the lucky recipients. They have their No-prize, we got our Bunny Award. Same, same.

Dear Wizards of Comicdom,

1) Do Wolverine and Rogue know their real full names?

2) If Beast shaved his fur, would he still be blue?

3) How do you rank your comic, card and toy prices?

Ron Jimenez Jr.
La Mirada, CA

1) Yep. They just ain't tellin'.

2) Well, we looked for all the hairless portions of the Beast we could find (without removing his little X-trunks, of course) and came up with his eyelids and his lips, both of which are blue. That leads us to believe that, yes, the Beast is blue-skinned under all that fur. Marvel spokesman John Cerilli's only official comment on the matter was that "Only his hairdresser knows for sure."

3) I think they're kind of funky, they've got a nice beat and they're easy to dance to. I give 'em an 86.

Dear Wizard,

A couple times now I've had dreams where I was in a comic store. In my dreams, I saw covers to comics that weren't out yet and that I hadn't seen before. The funny thing is, sometimes when I go to the comic store later, the covers in the stores are the same ones I dreamed about. I don't want to go so far as to say I'm psychic, but what else could it be? Are there are any jobs in the comic industry in which talents of my type would be needed?

Kenan Farrell
kfarrell@expert.cc.purdue.edu

To hell with the comic industry. Let's you and me go the horse track. I'll find a use for that kind of talent.

Dear Wizard People,

I've been looking in *Wizard* to find prices on the Marvel title *Secret Defenders*, but you haven't printed them in your price guide. Why not?

Jay Wyrick
Deltona, FL

The Secret Defenders are so darned secret that even the prices of their comics are secret. Sorry.

Hello, Wizard,

How come Todd McFarlane can never be reached for comment?

Frank Koshel
Sanford, FL
FKWHIZ@aol.com

I tried to reach Todd McFarlane for comment, but he could not be reached for comment on why he can never be reached for comment. Seriously.

Jim,

What happened to Sergio Aragonés? I haven't seen *Groo* in a long time. A little help, please!

Sawyer Williams
Albany, NY
Drywall26@aol.com

Sergio recently retired the Groo book,

FANPALS

Victor M. Rodriguez Jr.
Age: 5 Sex: Male
985 Kastner Dr
San Diego, CA 92154
Likes: *The Crow*, Wolverine, Ghost Rider

Arthur Brumett
Age: 4 Sex: Male
6605 Tri-County Rd.
Swanton, OH 43679
Likes: Spawn, Spider-Man

Melissa Carter
Age: 9 Sex: Female
10880 Highway 67
Space 415
Lakeside, CA 92040
Likes: Gen 13, X-Files, Witchblade

Sean Collier
Age: 9 Sex: Male
376 E. Riverside
Chula Vista, CA 91911
Likes: Aquaman, Batman, Venomous Tales, Spawn

Chris Foster 6/m
[illegible]
Likes: *X-Men*, *X-Factor*

Mark Cursino 11/m
[illegible]
Likes: *Generation X*, Spawn, Gen 13

Mitchell Fox 3/m
[illegible]
Likes: Spawn, Gen 13, Witchblade

Scott Northrup 14/m
[illegible]
Likes: Star Wars, Witchblade

Nick Jones 10
[illegible]
Likes: Bad Girl Illustrations, Batman, Fox, Fear

Catherine Caldwell [illegible]
[illegible]
Likes: *Generation X*, *Excalibur*, *X-Men*

TWO NEW VIDEOS RELEASED ON BAD BEHAVIOR.

LAW-ABIDING CITIZENS: BEAVIS AND BUTT-HEAD ARE JUST INNOCENT TEENAGERS, GUILTY OF TRYING TO HAVE A GOOD TIME. WATCH THEM MEET PRESIDENT CLINTON, ATTEMPT TO "DO IT" WITH AN UNDERCOVER PROSTITUTE, AND CARRY OUT OTHER UNLAWFUL ACTIVITIES THAT DON'T SUCK.

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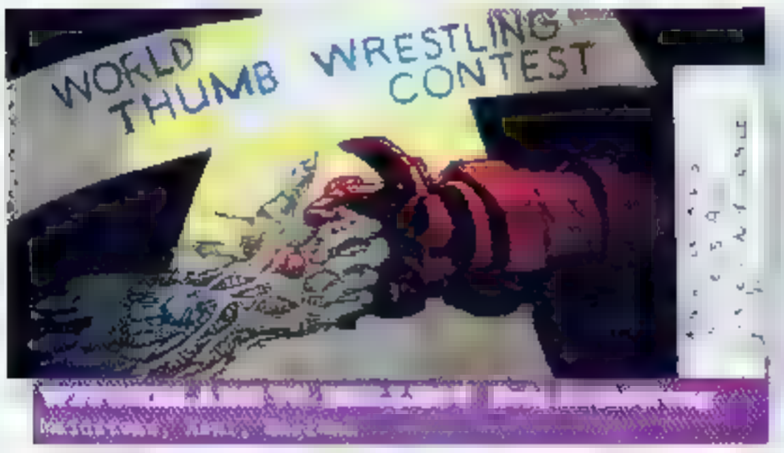
LETTER ART

Fans who got their letter art printed this month will each receive two issues of *Kid Supreme* autographed by Dan Frogo, plus a copy of this issue of *Wizard* signed by the entire *Wizard* creative staff, a snazzy *Wizard* T-shirt and a funky *Wizard* cap! The creator of the best envelope wins the comics, issue, shirt and cap, plus a piece of original *Kid Supreme* art by Frogo. (Thanks for the loot, Dan!) Artists, Please include a clearly printed return address and a list of characters depicted on the back of your envelope.



we're in the home stretch...

and after doing the Sergio Massacres Marvel *and* Sergio Destroys DC one-shots, *is moving back to his roots at* Mad. *He'll be doing 12 strips a year there.*

Dear Jim McLauchlin,

I have a few questions for you.

1) Do you bathe each day?

2) What is your Internet address, if you have one?

3) Can you please answer this letter?

4) Are you married or single? I ask because I know this great girl for you.

Khoa Tran
TTran19945@aol.com

I have a few answers for you.

1) Yes. If I get really sweaty, I might even bathe twice daily.

2) That would be WizWords@aol.com. *E-mailed letters to "Magic Words" can be sent to this address.*

3) Okay.

4) I'm single. I usually try to scare up girlies on my own, but what the heck—I'll give yours a try. Get yourself a big cardboard box, punch some air-holes in it, stuff her in, give her two egg salad sandwiches and express mail her to me. I'll see if she measures up.

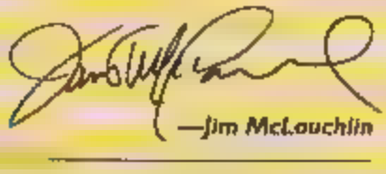
Dear Wizard,

Why is everyone suddenly into anime and mango? I hate them!

Mark Ritz
New Castle, DE

Yeah! Me hate them too! Manga bad! I mean, I could see kiwi fruit or maybe even pomegranates. But mangos? They're the yuckiest of the fruits!

God, how I love setups like that. Until we meet again, rest assured that I remain...



—Jim McLauchlin

Jim McLauchlin will write for beer. He will also write for Cheez-Its, football cards or issues of Werewolf by Night *that he needs.*

Send letters to:
Magic Words
151 Wells Ave.
Congers, NY 10920
or e-mail us at WizWords@AOL.Com

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UNLEASHED IN MARCH!

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Get Ready for Round Two of AMALGAM COMICS

You've been asking for it and they've finally listened! **Dark Claw Super-Soldier** and other favorite Amalgamated heroes are returning to action in April.

Marvel Comics and **DC Comics** have announced that **Amalgam Comics** will return for a second round during the week of April 2, for 12 all-new one-shots. Amalgam Comics: Round Two will be based upon the highly popular Amalgam comics which merged Marvel and DC characters into all-new ones released during the ***Marvel versus DC*** crossover in early 1996. Amalgam Comics: Round Two will feature both previously developed Amalgam characters and a handful of brand-new ones.

"They will all be #1s," said John Cerilli, junior publicist at Marvel Comics. "Just like last time, there will be six published by Marvel and six issued by DC."

Sources also indicate that the Amalgam titles will be the *only* superhero titles offered by both Marvel and DC that week. In addition, all titles will include the Amalgam logo.

Here's the lowdown on the 12 scheduled one-shots:

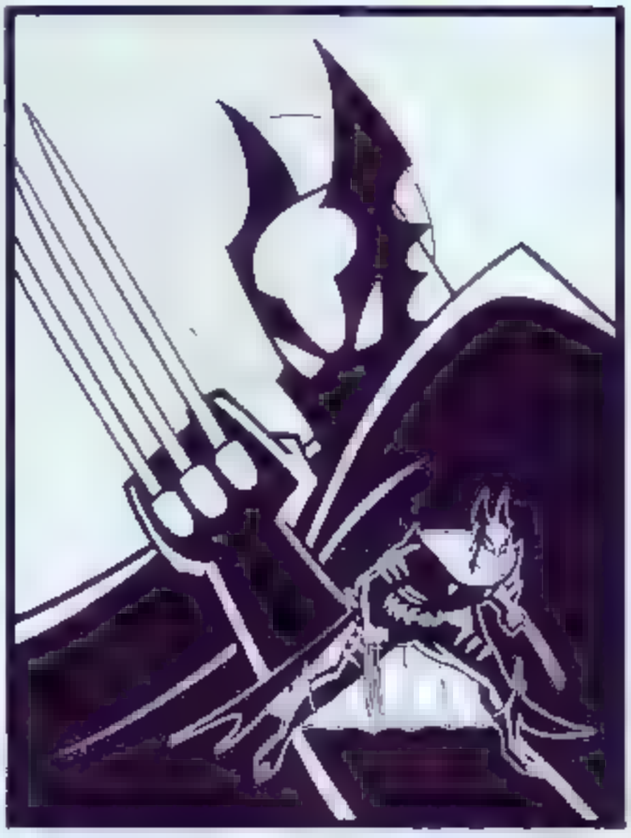
• ***Bat-Thing***—(*Batman/Thing* written by **Larry Hama**, drawn by **Rodolfo Damaggio** and **Bill Sienkiewicz**) When a scientist's experiment goes awry, he transforms into something that's half-bat/half-thing. The result is a creature seeking vengeance on a gang.

• ***The Dark Claw Adventures***—(*Wolverine/Batman Adventures*, written by **Ty Templeton**, drawn by Templeton and **Rick Burchett**) In an animated series style, Dark Claw encounters a new assassin in New Gotham named Lady Talia who is seeking revenge on Dark Claw, the man who killed her father Ra's A-Pocalypse in self-defense.

• ***Generation Hex***—(*Generation X/Jonah Hex*, written by **Peter Milligan**, drawn by **Adam Pollina**) Taking place in the Amalgam Universe's past, Jono Hex and his mutant posse of Skinhunter, Madame Banshee and Retribution roam the Western frontier and gunsling their way into the town of Humanity.

• ***JLX Unleashed***—(*Justice League of America/X-Men Unleashed*, written by **Christopher Priest**, drawn by **Oscar Jimenez** and **Hanibal Rodriguez**) Could this be the JLX's final battle? As the Hellfire League of Injustice calls upon Fin Fang Flame, things look bleak for all metamutants, especially since the JLX's recent beating by the Armageddon Agenda has left Mr. X, Apollo and the others inactive.

• ***Lobo the Duck***—(*Lobo/Howard the Duck*, written by **Alan Grant**, drawn by **Val Semeiks** and **Ray Kryssing**) Manhattan is destroyed. Spider-Boy, Dark Claw and even



Above: Covers for *Super Soldier: Man of War* #1 and *The Dark Claw Adventures* #1

Left: Covers for *Lobo the Duck #1* and *JLX Unleashed #1*

Super-Soldier are dead. It's up to the cigar-smoking Lobo the Duck to discover the identity of the culprit. Not even his loving girlfriend Bevariene can calm Lobo's wrath against Doctor Bong-Face.

• ***Super-Soldier: Man of War***—(*Superman/Captain America*, written by **Mark Waid**, drawn by **Dave Gibbons**) Flashback to World War II and the Golden Age of Amalgam as Super-Soldier meets up with Sgt. Rock and his Howling Commandos. As the evil Major Zemo prepares to experiment on the captured Commandos, can Super-Soldier prevail over Zemo and his secret weapon, the War Wheel?

• ***Challengers of the Fantastic***—(*Challengers of the Unknown/Fantastic Four*, written by **Karl Kesel**, drawn by **Tom Grummett** and **Al Vey**) S.H.I.E.L.D agent Sue Storm, scientific genius Reed Richards, young Johnny Storm and Senator Ben Grimm—four fantastic individuals known for cheating death—must face the coming of Galactia (a mix of Galactus and Brainiac).

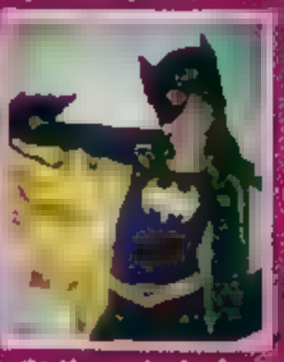
• ***Iron Lantern***—(*Iron Man/Green Lantern*, written by **Kurt Busiek**, drawn by **Paul Smith** and **Al Williamson**) Gaining his powers from Planet Oa and protected by his life-sustaining armor Hal Stark (the Iron Lantern), must use his otherworldly power to protect Stark Aircraft from the combined attack of Great White, Sapphire Masque and Mandarinestro!

• ***Magnetic Men Featuring Magneto***—(*Metal Men/Magneto*, written by **Tom Peyer**, drawn by **Barry Kitson** and **Dan Panosian**) Upon Magneto's request, the Magnetic Men attempt to create civilian identities for themselves, but the Sinister Society and its evil robots won't allow that to be as easy as it sounds.

• ***Spider-Boy Team-Up***—(*Spider-Man/Superboy*, written by **Karl Kesel** and **Roger Stern**, drawn by **Jo Cadronn**) Spider-Boy teams up with his 2099 counterpart Miguel in the present, and with the help of the Time Cube, Spider-Boy ventures to 2099 where he hooks up with the Legion of Galactic Guardians. This issue promises guest stars galore.

• ***Thorion of the New Angels***—(*Thor/New Gods*, written by **Keith Giffen**, drawn by **John Romita Jr.**) Battling in the polar region between New Asgard and Apokalips, Thorion takes on his evil brother L'Ok D'Saad. When the dust settles, Thanoseid emerges from the shadows to cause even more disharmony.

• ***Uncanny X-Patrol***—(*Uncanny X-Men/Doom Patrol*, written by **Barbara Kesel**, drawn by **Bryan Hitch**) Your favorite X-Patrol members are back: Niles Cabie, Elasti-Girl, Shatterstarfire, Ferro-Man, Beastling and Dial H.U.S.K.! And in this issue, it's the X-Patrol vs. the Brother Brood! 'Nuff said! ■ *Matthew Senreich*



ahead

WAID & KUBERT ON 'KA-ZAR'!

TITANS GO MANGA!

AND COMPANY UPDATES!

Overburdened Kesel Leaves 'Daredevil'

"*Daredevil* #364 will be my last issue," said **Karl Kesel**, current writer of *Daredevil*. "The reason for my departure is simply that I feel like I've been working too much lately and I feel as if my work is not as good as it could be."

According to Kesel, the decision to drop *Daredevil* was not an easy one. Kesel, regular writer of ***Adventures of Superman, Superboy and the Rovers*** and *Daredevil*, has felt overburdened by his workload in recent months and has decided that he needed to leave one of his regular monthly titles in order to better devote his time to the other two.

"If I was doing a little less work, I think the work I did do would be a lot better," said Kesel. "Maybe I'm fooling myself, but I really do feel a bit stretched thin."

With that mentality, Kesel was forced into choosing which of his three regular titles to leave. "*Superman* was not going away. *Superman* is a steady gig, and in the unsteady marketplace, I never really considered sending that one away," said Kesel. "So I found myself going back and forth between *Superboy* and *Daredevil*.

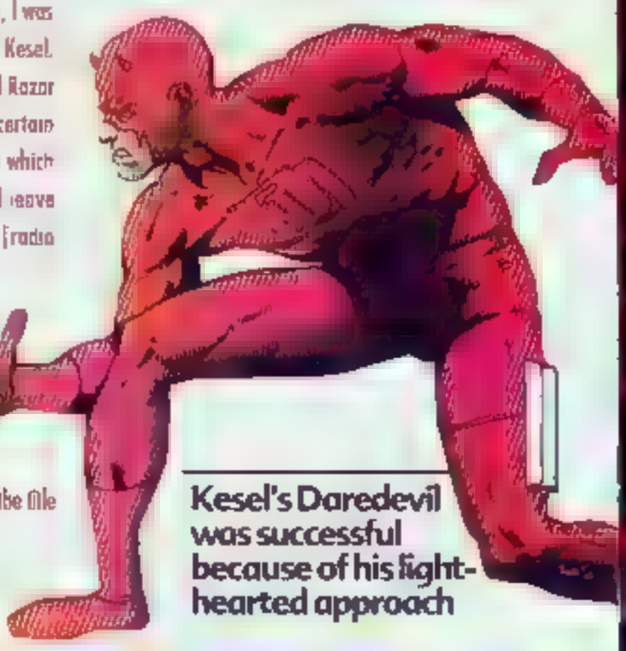
"It was hard because *Daredevil* was receiving such great coverage, but I just feel that I couldn't fig-ure out what to do with the character," he added. "And the *Superboy* book is just so much fun to work on. So I chose to cross off *Daredevil*."

In his final few issues, Kesel will concentrate on *Daredevil*'s supporting cast—specifically **Foggy Nelson** and **Karen**—rather than center on **Matt Murdock** (a.k.a. Daredevil).

"It would have been nice to say I left Matt in a new situation, but where I was in the story, I was at the point of resolving other stuff," said Kesel. "I'll take the relationship between Foggy and Nelson to a certain plateau where there will be a certain confrontation and resolution between them which I felt was important to do. And Karen will leave with a question mark concerning her job at [radio station] WFSK."

Beginning with *Daredevil* #365, **Joe Kelly** (the new ***Deadpool*** mini-series, *2099: World of Tomorrow*) will officially take over the writing reigns of the book. Meanwhile, **Cary Nord** will remain on the title as regular penciler.

In addition to Kesel departing *Daredevil*, editor James Felder will also be leaving not only from *Daredevil*, but from Marvel Comics in January, citing personal reasons. "We are sad to see Jim go," said Marvel Editor-in-Chief **Bob Harras**. "And we wish him the best in his future endeavors. Also, we are sorry to see Karl go, but we're excited to have Joe Kelly taking on the book." ■ *Matthew Senreich*



Kesel's Daredevil was successful because of his light-hearted approach

Marvel Files for Bankruptcy

Marvel Comics will need more than superheroes to pull the company out of financial difficulty.

Marvel Entertainment Group Inc. filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy on Dec. 27 and has proposed a $525 million restructuring plan to bring the company back to its mighty Marvel roots. Despite this bankruptcy filing, Marvel Comics will continue to publish its comic books on time and has announced that all of its employees will continue to get paid.

"There will be absolutely no interruption of our publishing schedule or our development plans for TV and feature film [projects], interactive products and services, licenses and sponsor partnerships, themed restaurants and theme park attractions," said **David Schreff**, president and COO of Marvel Entertainment Group. "We plan to produce just as many books every month, with no interruptions. We plan to continue to employ our editors, creators, artists and so forth."

According to Schreff, all freelancers and creators will continue to be paid in full and on time, including exclusive contracted artists, such as *Uncanny X-Men* penciler **Joe Madureira** and *Ka-Zar* penciler **Andy Kubert**.

Marvel Entertainment Group is currently comprised of Marvel Comics, Toy Biz (toys and action figures), Fleer/SkyBox (trading cards), Marvel Studios (film and television development), Marvel Mania (restaurant chain) and Marvel Interactive (computer products and online services). **Ron Perelman** (who currently owns Marvel Entertainment Group, with approximately 80% of the Marvel stock, is attempting to maintain control of Marvel Entertainment during the financial restructuring. According to published reports, Carl Icahn (owner of TWA and currently battling for control of RJR-Nabisco) has vowed to fight Perelman in court concerning the questionable nature in which Perelman is handling the payment of Marvel shareholders and bondholders. ■ *Matthew Senreich*

Editor's Note: This story broke as *Wizard* went to press. Look for the complete story on Marvel in next month's *Wizard*.

BUZZ BOX

The inside scoop on the comic industry

• Sources inside **Marvel Comics** hint that the publisher plans to have a **"Flashback Month"** this summer. During that month, all Marvel Universe stories in all titles will take place 10 years in the past. The **"Heroes Reborn"** titles will remain unaffected by the "Flashback Month" and it is still unsure as to whether that month's "Flashback" books will be self contained stories or part of a multiple-issue story arc.

• Word on the street has it that this summer's big X-crossover is entitled **"Zero Tolerance."** Tensions will flair more than ever before in the X Universe, as humans will have well, zero tolerance for mutants.

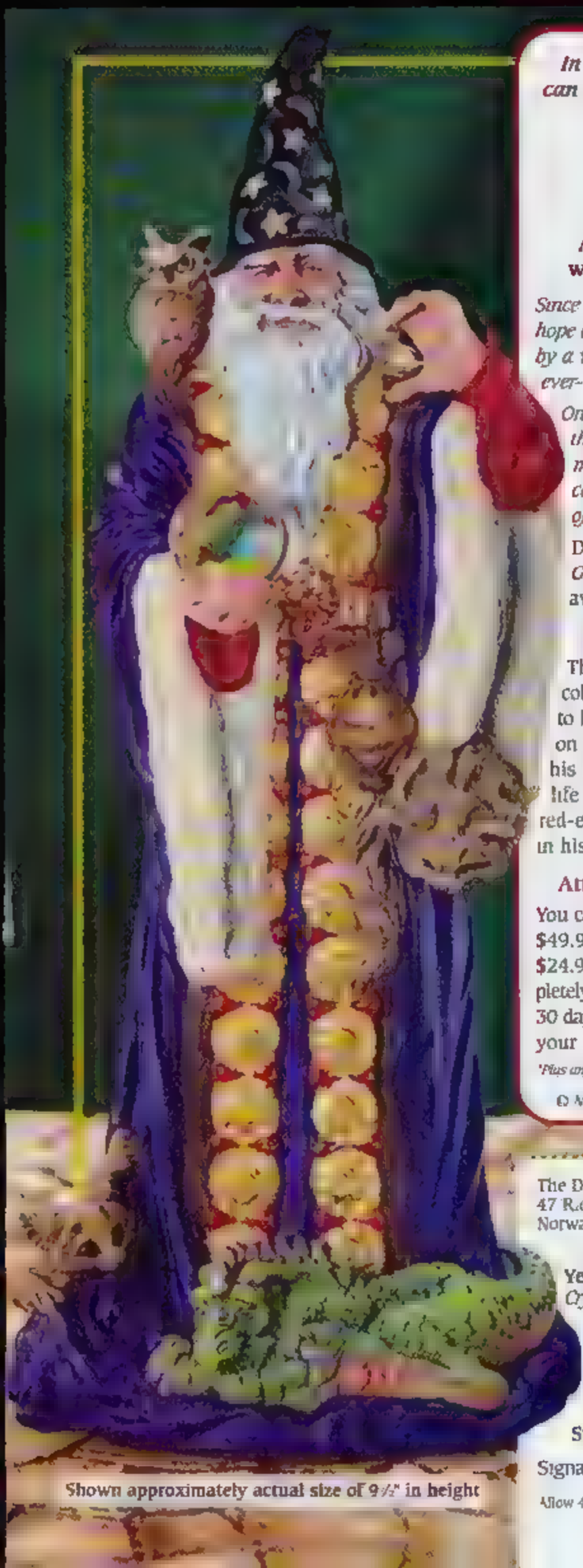
• It is expected that **Joe Lee** (*Hellshock*) will draw ***X-Men/WildC.A.T.s*** #4. The storyline is said to tie into the **"Days of Future's Past"** tale from way back in ***Uncanny X-Men*** **#141-#142**.

• **"Heroes Reborn"** guest-artist update! **Ian Churchill** is expected to fill in on ***Avengers*** from #6 to #12. **Stephen Platt** is expected to fill in for **Rob Liefeld** on ***Captain America*** **#10 and #11**.

• **Steven T. Seagle** (***Sandman Mystery Theatre***) is scheduled to write Marvel's monthly ***Alpha Flight***, due out later this year.

• **Art Adams** (***Monkeyman & O'Brien***) has been pegged by WildStorm Productions to draw the ***Gen^{13}/Generation X*** crossover. The book is slated to hit shelves in 2003. (Relax, just kidding. No release date has been set.)

• ***Heroes for Hire***, a new Marvel team book set for May, stars **Hulk, Hercules, Power Man, Iron Fist** and **White Tiger**.



Shown approximately actual size of 9½" in height

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7992FWZ1

Waid/Kubert Reunite to Revive Ka-Zar

It's a savage land out there and **Ka-Zar** is ready to tackle it.

Marvel Comics has announced that it will be publishing a new *Ka-Zar* ongoing monthly title which will be reuniting the ***X-Men*** creative team of **Mark Waid** and **Andy Kubert**. Scheduled to debut in March, the new *Ka-Zar* series plans to update and modernize the Ka-Zar character.

"It's not going to be so much like Tarzan," said Kubert. "Ka-Zar's going to be much more sophisticated in this series."

The Ka-Zar project stems from Waid and Kubert's desire to work together again. But why Ka-Zar?

"I was reaching the point creatively where I needed to do something else," said Kubert. "Since Mark and I were looking to work together again, we went through a list of Marvel characters that didn't go over to image [for Heroes Reborn] and came up with Ka-Zar."

The series will follow Ka-Zar in his adventures to protect his homeland—the

Savage Land—against corruption from outside sources. Ka-Zar's adventures will extend from the Savage Land to New York City. Filled with the supporting cast from 1980s *Ka-Zar* series, the new Ka-Zar will be accompanied by his wife **Shanna the She-Devil** and his sidekick tiger **Zabu**.

"The main conflict throughout the series will be surrounding Shanna who likes living in the Savage Land and shuns civilization," said Kubert. "Then there is Ka-Zar who loves civilization, which will make for tension."

Leading up to the series, Marvel has scheduled a number of one-shots and guest appearances for Ka-Zar, starting in December with the *Ka-Zar of the Savage Land* and *Marvel Universe* one-shots, in ***Sensational Spider-Man* #13-#15**. Ka-Zar will play a supporting role that will subtly lead into *Ka-Zar* #.

"One of the main villains will be Ka-Zar's brother who wants him dead, so his brother will hire this guy Gregor who worked with Kraven [the Hunter]," said Kubert. In addition to showing up in *Sensational Spider-Man*, Ka-Zar will appear in ***Incredible Hulk* #454**, as the Hulk takes a trip to the Savage Land.

"It's going to be a rollercoaster full of action," said Kubert. "Mark and I are very excited to work together again, and with our excitement, we're going to make *Ka-Zar* worth reading." ■ *Matthew Senreich*

Titans Go Manga With 'Scissors, Paper, Stone'

Manga hits the mainstream this March when **DC Comics** will release ***Titans: Scissors, Paper, Stone***, an Elseworlds prestige one-shot by ***Dirty Pair*** writer/artist **Adam Warren**.

"I love manga," confessed *Teen Titans* editor Dan Thorsland. "This project began with plans for a Legends of the Dead Earth *Titans* annual and my hankering to work with Adam Warren. It seemed natural—he has such a great take on younger characters. This was a project where he could get away with almost anything."

Warren was amenable to the idea, came up with a concept and started work. As the first pages came in, the project shifted gears, according to Thorsland. "I showed them to [DC Executive Editor] **Mike Carlin** and he said, 'This is too good to just be an annual; we have to make this a prestige book. We gave Adam another 10 pages and put it on glossy pages."

The story takes place 6000 years in the future, as a young woman named Jamadagni puts together a team of young heroes to deal with a major crisis, in much the same way Raven pulled together the second set of Titans in the early 1980s.

So how will this project be different from a mainstream approach to superhero action? "A lot of what I like about manga is the character design, which you're starting to see in American comics. But another part is the more adventurous approach to storytelling," Warren explained. And Warren pledged that Japanese elements of storytelling will be a part of *Scissors, Paper, Stone*: "I didn't do anything to make my work more 'American' for this project," he said.

Thorsland agreed: "It's 48 pages of stuff that only Adam Warren could write and illustrate—including action sequences featuring 60-foot monsters and stuff like that. A lot of humor and a lot of torment and angst all mixed up—it's the distilled essence of the Wolfman/Pérez Titans 6000 years in the future."

Titans: Scissors, Paper, Stone ships March 5 at a cover price of $4.95. ■ *Patrick Daniel O'Neill*

We Looked It Up

G'nort (Nort) *DC Universe*, noun 1 A dog like member of the now-extinct Green Lantern Corps 2 Given a power ring by the Guardians as a favor to Guy Gardner 3 He's currently at a dog pound somewhere waiting for the right person to give him a home 4 The sound you make if you hold your nose while sneezing

'Cry For Dawn' Creators Pursue Forgeries

Joseph Monks, president of CFD Productions, writer/artist **Joseph Michael Linsner** and **Sirius Entertainment** publisher **Robb Horan** are all hot in pursuit of whoever is responsible for creating counterfeit copies of ***Cry For Dawn*** #1, the title co-produced by Monks and Linsner. *Cry For Dawn* is now continued under the title *Dawn* by Linsner alone for Sirius Entertainment.

All three have promised to prosecute to the fullest extent of the law when the perpetrators are found.

The counterfeit copies of *Cry For Dawn* #1 first surfaced at the Motor City Con in Detroit in October 1996. Horan said they can be easily identified by the poor separations and printing on the cover.

The [illegible] square pattern in the clouds on the cover does not exist on the original first printing of *Cry For Dawn* #1, Horan explained. Although no other CFD or Sirius Entertainment products appear to have been forged, Horan said he has found "reason to believe that this is not an isolated incident of counterfeiting recent hot books."

Monks was blunt in his opinion of the forgers.

"As a publisher, I find it reprehensible that anybody who obviously has no creative talent of their own would go out and rip off people who do," he said. "Just because some lowlife can use a scanner doesn't make them anything more than the crooks they are."

Linsner was equally angry.

"It drives me clean out of my mind with anger whenever I think of some money-hungry half-wit printing my work behind my back," he declared. "This whole thing hurts me artistically. It hurts me business-wise and it hurts me on a personal level."

Horan, Linsner and Monks are offering a reward for information leading to the identification and arrest of the counterfeiters. Anyone with such information should call (201) 347-6634 and ask for Linsh. ■ *Patrick Daniel O'Neill*

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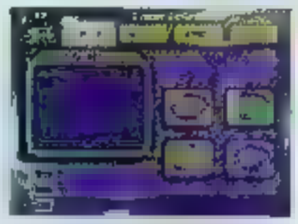

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Valentino Launches New Line of Books for Image

Jim Valentino is expanding his Image.

Valentino has launched a new line of comic books for **Image Comics** in January that will feature 19 books by September including Caliber's ***Jinx*** and the return of ***Starchild*** in a new series entitled *Starchild: Metropolis*.

Incorporating existing independent titles with brand new comic books, Valentino has enlisted the new titles for Image and not to showcase his Shadowline imprint.

"These comics will not be distinguished as Shadowline books," said Valentino. "Though they will be published through Shadowline, they are Image books.

"For the last five years, Image has predominantly produced superheroes, but as Image is growing, we want to reach beyond that," said Valentino. "I'm basically taking relatively unknown properties and trying to place them in the light."

One book seeking to gain a bit more exposure is *Jinx* which makes the jump to Image from Caliber Press. *Jinx* will relaunch at Image beginning in June, and creator **Brian Michael Bendis** assures readers that he will stay true to *Jinx*. "*Jinx* will still be black and white. It'll still be crime fiction," said Bendis. "The biggest complaint I got was that it was hard to find." In addition to *Jinx*, ***Ship of Fools*** has also left Caliber to join Valentino's diverse new line.

Also in June, Valentino will reprint James Owen's first 12 issues of *Starchild* in *The Original Starchild*. The monthly reprints will set the stage for James Owen's launch of *Starchild: Metropolis*, which begins in July and will most likely be published bimonthly.

Other new comic books include the March releases of ***The Adventures of Aaron*** by Aaron Warner (based on a syndicated comic strip), Halloween Comics' ***Age of Heroes*** and a four-issue mini-series entitled ***Soulwind***. April will see ***Aaron Strips*** (which will reprint the newspaper strip), ***Amanda and Gaza*** by Jimmie Robinson, ***Dusty Star*** by Joe Pruett and Andrew Robinson and Halloween Comics ***Espers*** by **James Hudnall**. In addition, Image will publish ***The Badger*** by **Mike Baron** (May), ***Replacement God*** by Zander Cannon (May), ***Nameless*** by Joe Pruett and **Phil Hester** (May), ***Bliss Alley*** by **Bill Messner-Loebs** (July), ***Jack Magic*** by **Richard Case** (July), ***Childhood's End*** by Malcolm Bourne and **Jim Calafiore** (September) and ***Ragnarok*** by Rob Walton (September). ■ *Matthew Sarreich (with additional reporting by Buddy Scalera)*

Where Are They Now?

GENE COLAN

"My first big break in comics came from **Stan Lee** when he was just a kid," Gene Colan said recalling his first job at **Timely Comics** in 1946. "Stan may have been only three years older than me, but he was running the place and got me a job right away."

Working in comics for more than 50 years, Colan has left an indelible mark on the industry with unforgettable runs on Marvel's ***Daredevil*** and ***Tomb of Dracula***. He entered the comic book industry following a start in the animated cartoons in the 1940s. "Back in those days, you got freelance work wherever you could get it, and then, if you got lucky, early to stay really busy, you made the rounds and got work at Quality Comics, Fawcett Publications and even DC."

After [illegible] Golden Age companies, Colan [illegible] the comic industry was [illegible]. The Comic Book Code, the McCarthy Committee and things like that caused everything to be [illegible]," he said. "I couldn't find work anywhere and eventually had to go into advertising art."

Colan remained in advertising until the start of comic books and the formation of Marvel Comics. In the early 1960s, he actually came back up again with new excitement with fantastic heroes," he said. "I started getting enough work to leave the advertising field. I was glad to leave because comics is what I loved."

With Marvel [illegible] asked Colan to draw ***Dr. Strange*** and ***Submariner*** [illegible] the title before Colan took the reins [illegible] with issue #26 (1968). "John really [illegible] learning my craft and trying to [illegible] Daredevil that I gained a lot of confidence [illegible]."

[illegible] Marvel began to expand beyond superhero [illegible] monster and horror books. Colan, a huge Dracula fan, proposed *Tomb of Dracula* to Lee. "Though Stan hedged on it at first, *Tomb of Dracula* was the only monster book that prevailed in the long run," said Colan. "I was putting everything I had into it and I worked on it until I got tired.

"After *Tomb of Dracula*, it was sort of like a revolving door for everybody, back and forth working with Marvel and DC, and doing freelance for Comico and Eclipse."

Due to his heavy penciling and shaded detail in his artwork that enhanced a character's mood, companies like Comico and Eclipse began to publish Colan's pencils unaided in the '80s. "Inkers had a hard time capturing the tone and mood I would produce in my pencils," he said. "So when people started reproducing my work directly from pencil, that's when it was totally my work and I was probably happiest."

In recent years, Colan has worked on a few projects here and there, including a revival of *Tomb of Dracula*, however he recently has been recovering from surgery to combat his 20-year-battle with glaucoma. In the early '90s, the glaucoma had deteriorated Colan's eyesight so much that he was practically blind. "It was hard not to be able to see well enough to draw, but now things seem to be getting stable and I am able to work again."

The spirited Colan has already guest-penciled February's ***Daredevil #363*** for Marvel, and is now hard at work on a three-issue mini-series, ***Predator: Hell & Hot Water*** scheduled for April from Dark Horse. "It's great to work again," said Colan. "And I'm excited that following this, I'm going to do Dracula again, this time for Dark Horse and I'll hopefully do that until who knows." ■ *Matthew Sanreach*

[illegible] D pad, shoot with D pad [illegible]

Catching Up With...

CHUCK DIXON AND 'GREEN ARROW'

After revamping *Green Arrow* almost two years ago, writer Chuck Dixon has developed a [illegible] based on the book [illegible] #19. Hopefully, you have been following the current Green Arrow, Connor Hawke, as he goes to locate his father, Oliver Queen. Now, with the [illegible] of the return of Oliver Queen, the original Green Arrow, Wizard decided to get the low-down on the [illegible] quest and see what Chuck Dixon had in store for [illegible].

What new [illegible] will Connor be seeing in the [illegible]?

The biggest news is that he and Eddie Fyvers will be separated for quite a few months. They inadvertently became a team, but it's not a team book. The details [illegible] other [illegible] the book nothing [illegible] the trap of a [illegible] he needs to cleanse himself of [illegible] because of this, he'll become like his father was during his dark days. Those were. Connor will eventually go to southeast Asia [illegible] someone he thinks might be Oliver Queen. Connor began to [illegible] that perhaps Oliver Queen could be alive, even though he supposedly blew up in an airplane.

So will [illegible] in Asia?

[illegible] mystery. It's universal and it will remain so. There [illegible] in northeast Asia sets you up for the possibility that Oliver Queen might not be around.

What other big stories are planned?

Connor returns to Japan in disgrace and discovers that Master Jamen has been tricked out as head of the Ashram (a martial arts organization). Connor goes to the Ashram and tries to straighten it out. The whole idea is that the Ashram is violated as Connor unsuccessfully tries to reinstate Master Jamen. That's lead into learning about Connor's grandfather, who is a loner living in the middle of Idaho on a cattle ranch. We'll see him as a Korean War veteran and a lot of what he went through in the Korean War corresponds with what Connor is experiencing now. Connor's failure to put Master Jamen back in head of the Ashram is his first humiliating defeat. He'll have a hard time recovering and his grandfather helps him through that. He'll still not be totally unaware of females. Where his father would have exploited it, Connor's oblivious to it.

Any plans for superhero team-ups, more specifically further Green Lantern/Green Arrow team-ups?

Beginning with the double-length *Green Arrow* #125 to whatever Green Lantern book follows, *Green Arrow* #126, we'll be doing a story on racial tensions in America and how much is real and how much is imagined or media-based. Hopefully, it'll be a little more upbeat than these kind of stories usually are. It'll be an ongoing origin of how well Green Arrow and Green Lantern get along.

Any other cameos worth mentioning?

We're planning an Arsenal appearance soon that'll be major. Black Canary will probably pop in again. She's so hot world now like Oracle, but nothing in the immediate issues.

Will Connor join the JLA?

I really don't see that happening, but it hasn't really been discussed. Perhaps in the future. ■ *Matthew Jarrach*

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THE SPIDER THAT'S ALSO AN
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First Public Display of 'Bone' Original Art

Despite five years of commercial and critical success, **Jeff Smith**, creator of ***Bone***, was still blown away by his original art exhibit at the Words and Pictures Museum in Northampton, Mass. The artist signed books and drew sketches for the large crowd that showed up in almost a foot of snow on December 7. Adoring fans brought everything from their own portfolios to a female fan's cautiously displayed Ted the bug tattoo.

Smith was excited about his first trip to the museum.

"It's a wonderful museum," Smith said. "It's fantastic. The permanent collection is dream-stuff. They've got something from everybody!"

The exhibit, running from Nov. 29-Feb. 2, is the first public display of *Bone* original art. Smith never sells his art and immediately stores it in the closet when it comes back from the printers.

Upcoming exhibits include ***Fax from Sarajevo*** with **Joe Kubert**, February 6-April 6, and the work of Paul Mavrides, April 10-June 1. For details, contact the museum at (413) 586-8545.

And what of the future of *Bone*? Smiley and Fone Bone will have a hilarious adventure returning the rat creature cub to the mountains as the book moves away from fantasy and back to the humor of the earlier *Bone* issues. Smith has completed his screenplay for the *Bone* movie and coyly admits to interest from unnamed studios. "We have some good conversations going," he said. Most surprisingly of all, Smith is considering more Cartoon Books titles.

"I'm actually thinking about expanding [the Cartoon Books Universe]," Smith admitted. "It's just very tentative. We're looking into it ... possibly publishing some other things." When pressed, if this expansion would be new characters or new creators, Smith replied, "Both." ■ *Andy Lee*

Jeff Smith (above) impressed with his *Bone* exhibit

NEWS BITES

WildStorm Unveils Its First Online Comic Book, 'Siege'

The World Wide Web will soon be under siege if WildStorm Productions has its way.

WildStorm, in conjunction with GTE Entertainment, will release ***Siege***, WildStorm's first online comic book property in January. Siege will be posted on WildStorm's website at **http://www.wildstorm.com** beginning January 2.

Originally designed as both a CD-ROM game and a comic book that can be read and played independently of each other, *Siege* will offer a more comprehensive experience through using both versions.

"To me, putting the first issue of Siege up on the Internet makes perfect sense," said WildStorm's VP of Marketing **Jeff Marrotte**. "The Internet is going to be a crucial part of this game—players will be able to download new characters, for instance, after they're introduced in the comic, and add them to their gameplay. So the game and the comic complement each other."

WildStorm will post a new comic book page online every weekday in January and the full comic will be on sale in print format at the end of January. *Siege* will come out monthly, leading up to the CD-ROM game's release scheduled for early summer. ■ *Matthew Sassaich*

Topps Releases X-Files Graphic Novel 'Afterlight'

They're strange visitors from another planet with powers far beyond those of mortal men. But this time, they're space aliens. And of course, everybody's favorite FBI agents are first on the scene for the investigation.

In February, **Topps** releases **"Afterlight,"** a creepy **X-Files** graphic novel. In the 64-page one-shot, Special Agents Dana Scully and Fox Mulder investigate a UFO sighting in Texas. The twist: Mulder believes this very UFO originally appeared in the 1800s.

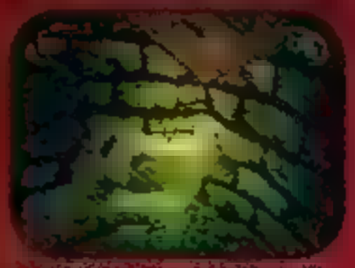
"Naturally, a variety of forces, some terrestrial and some perhaps not, have taken a deadly interest in the project," said writer **Stefan Petrucha**.

The graphic novel, illustrated by **Jill Thompson**, marks the final X-Files comic book story by writer Petrucha, who cites "creative differences" with the "X-Files" television series.

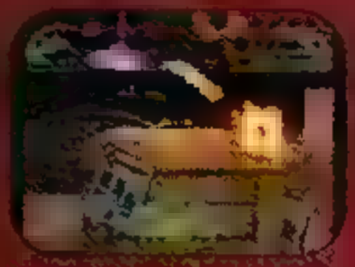
The *X-Files* comic book series continues to grow, however, with Topps adapting actual show scripts in ***The X-Files: Season One*** series, including several by creator **Chris Carter**. ■ *Buddy Scalera*

EIGHT LEGS AND HEAVILY ARMED

You're trapped in the body of a cyborg spider. Creeping down drain pipes. Crawling on ceilings. Wandering through



over 30 levels in six 3D worlds. You're picking up missile launchers, cleavers and other deadly weapons as you



fight cyber rats, mantises and wasps. Needless to say, you're not an itsy bitsy spider.

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FROM THE PAGES OF STARMAN

THE SHADE

Written by JAMES ROBINSON. Illustrated by GENE HA, J.H. WILLIAMS III, BRET BLEVINS, MICHAEL ZULLI, TONY HARRIS and MICK GRAY.

Also available this month: THE STARMAN T-SHIRT, STARMAN HENLEY SHIRT, STARMAN WATCH, and STARMAN TIN BADGE.

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WHAT'S UP ON WIZARD WORLD

Fire up that modem and get on "Wizard World." The Asteroid X Club (a club of . . . rabid X-fanatics) and "Wizard World" are sponsoring a wild Online Scavenger Hunt. This crazy game is going to lead fans on a raucous romp through "Wizard World" online, their back issues of *Wizard* and parts of the Web. The top-top finishers will win an original, color X-Men sketch by Joe Lee (*Hellshock*). Plus, we'll have dozens of super-cool prizes for runner-runners-up. Visit the Asteroid X forum in the Clubs section of "Wizard World" on AOL for full entry details.

Call 800-754-4400 to hook up to "Wizard World" on America Online. You'll get free software and 15 hours of free online time. Keyword: Wizard.

CHAT SCHEDULES FOR THE SPECIAL EVENTS ROOM

(Note: All chats are weekly unless otherwise noted.)

MONDAY

- **MANGA/ANIME**
  Time: 8-9 p.m. (EST)
  March 3, 10, 17, 31
- **BREAKING IN** Featuring: David Campiti
  Time: 8-9 p.m. (EST)
  March 24
- **WILDSTORM**
  Time: 9-10 p.m. (EST)
  March 3, 17
- **TOP COW**
  Time: 9-10 p.m. (EST)
  March 10, 31

TUESDAY

- ***WIZARD* UNPLUGGED** Featuring: *Wizard* Editors Online
  Time: 8-9 p.m. (EST)
- **X-MEN TRIVIA** Featuring: X-Fort Benny Powell
  Time: 9-10 p.m. (EST)

WEDNESDAY

- **ASTEROID X CLUB**
  Time: 6-7 p.m. (EST)
- **TRIVIA CHAT** Featuring: Wizard Freelancer Matt Jones
  Time: 8-9 p.m. (EST)
  March 5, 19
- **AVENGERS ASSEMBLE**
  Time: 9-10 p.m. (EST)

THURSDAY

- **MYSTERY GUEST** Featuring Jeanne Sawkowski & Mystery Guest
  Time: 8-9 p.m. (EST)
  March 20
- **WEBHEADS CLUB**
  Time: 9-10 p.m. (EST)
- ***INQUEST* CHAT** Featuring: *InQuest*'s Rick Mescatello
  Time: 10-11 p.m. (EST)
  December 5, 12, 19

FRIDAY

- **LOOP (LEGION OF OVERPOWER, MARVEL CCG)**
  Time: 9-10 p.m. (EST)
- **ASTEROID X CLUB**
  Time: 10-11 p.m. (EST)

SATURDAY

- **FANTASTIC FOUR CLUB**
  Time: 9-10 p.m. (EST)

SUNDAY

- **SANDMAN100 COMIC BOOK CHAT**
  Time: 8-10 p.m. (EST)

(Monday Online WizardTCK@aol.com)

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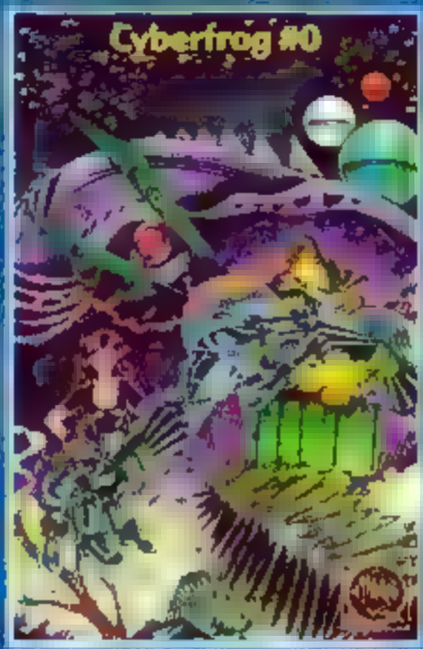

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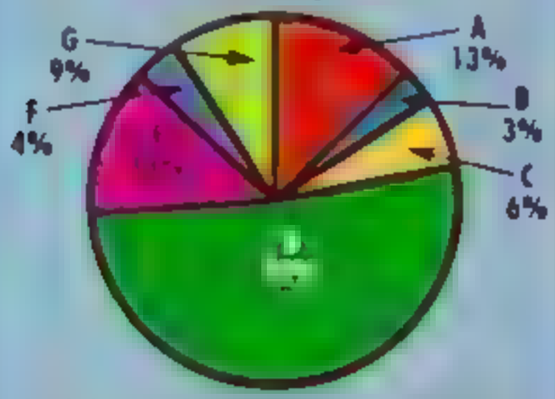
Question of the Month

Read any good crossovers lately? In 1996, we saw many of our favorite characters mingle with characters from other universes. And it was cool to see how superheroes from various companies would tango with each other. Gearing up for 1997, we thought we'd use our AOL poll as our "Wizard World" forum to see what our online friends thought of these company crossovers.

Our first question was:

What was your favorite company crossover in 1996?

A) *All Access*; **B)** *Bedrock/Wolverine*; **C)** *Batman/Captain America*; **D)** *Marvel versus DC*; **E)** *Star Trek/X-Men*; **F)** *Youngblood/X-Force*; **G)** Other



We also asked our online friends their opinions on the following questions:

• In 1996, do you think there were: Too many company crossovers (64%), just enough company crossovers (24%) or not enough company crossovers (10%)?

While fans seemed to eat up watching their favorite heroes and villains team up or battle, the majority felt that the marketplace was simply swamped with these company crossovers. "I was drowning," said one respondent. "Water is good, but in abundance, I will drown. With these company crossovers, I couldn't afford to buy them all, so the good ones were drowned out."

• Which crossover are you most looking forward to in 1997: *Generation X/Gen*[13] (38%), *X-Men/WildC.A.T.s* (28%), *Batman/Aliens* (17%), *Batman/Gen*[13] (10%), *JLA/WildC.A.T.s* (5%) or other (2%)?

• Which company crossover would you like to see in 1997: *Spawn/Spider-Man* (31%), *Avengers/JLA* (30%), other (20%), *Captain America/Superman* (10%), *Kingpin/Lex Luthor* (5%) or *Hitman/Punisher* (4%)?

It was a close race, but *Spawn/Spider-Man* just edged out *Avengers/JLA*. Heck, let's pray both of these company crossovers pop up sometime in the near future! Besides the options given, many online fans took the opportunity to post their opinions of what would make the coolest company crossover, and we received an abundance of random ones from *Batman/Sin City* to *Thor/New Gods* to *Gen/Boss* (our personal fave).

● *Sorrell Booke*

SPOTLIGHT ON:

TITLE: [illegible]
CREATOR: [illegible]
PUBLISHER: [illegible]
CURRENT ISSUE: [illegible] published bimonthly, [illegible]
BACK ISSUES: [illegible] by Bookmark Productions. There was also a six-page [illegible] Born Bad.

Rib—a 91-year-old human-sized talking worm—is looking for [illegible] has just been released from an orphanage. Stuck in a world [illegible] city Metro to learn about his past. Stumbling into a Metro [illegible] this rule, the bartender offers Rib a job in exchange for room and [illegible] conversations and pulls Rib aside, urging him to join a worm-only commune operating outside the rules of society. While the prospect of joining the commune may provide clues into Rib's past, he is [illegible] human-hating worms.

The central theme of *Rib* is prejudice. The real appeal of the book is the subtle comparisons to the plight of minorities in the United States searching for equal rights, and the power in which Andrew Ford delivers this underlying theme. For instance, as Rib walks down a Metro street, he furtively glances side to side [illegible] allegorical references to [illegible] you look at it, *Rib* radiates a lighter feel than Carabas or a more [illegible] into the so-called fantasy world that is so obviously [illegible]

Its the end of the world as we know it...
BRANDON '95 BATTLE
AND I FEEL FINE.
Brandon Peterson's
ARCANUM #1
the count down to armageddon begins in MARCH.
TOP COW

ABOVE: Lusiphur, the star assassin of *Poison Elves*
BELOW: (From left) Lusiphur, his lover Cassandra and his reluctant ally Lester

Choose Your Poison

Combining 'The Lord of the Rings' with 'The Terminator,' *Poison Elves* isn't your typical fantasy comic

By Craig Shutt

Creator Drew Hayes has an easy way to describe his *Poison Elves* to new readers.

"'Terminator' meets 'The Lord of the Rings,'" the writer-artist explains with a laugh. If that doesn't do it, picture Gothic elfin assassins in the land of *Cerebus*. Or an *Elfquest* story about bad dudes who kill people for a living.

In other words, it's not like any fantasy tale you've likely read before.

"*Poison Elves* is the story of a world and an individual [the elf Lusiphur], what he goes through living there, how he adapts to it and how he survives," Hayes elaborates in his somewhat laid back voice. "At this point in the story, he's an assassin, so he's pretty dark. In fact, he's definitely one of the nastier characters in comics. I didn't necessarily intend for that to happen, but it kinda got that way."

At least on the surface, Hayes admits, his pacing and style have been compared to Dave Sim's *Cerebus*. That accessible look combined with elf characters may attract fans of other fantasy elf stories. Big mistake. "New readers sometimes freak out when they see that my elves are mean and kick ass," the 27-year-old Washington resident says. "They aren't little pansy fairy elves. But I've never met anyone who read an issue and didn't want to come back for the next one."

Reading the next issue has been easier since June 1995, when the self-published book from Mulehide Graphics was picked up by Sirius Entertainment, starting over with a new #1. The move turned the book monthly and gave Hayes stronger financial footing, but he's sometimes accused of "selling out" the self-publishing movement. "I didn't get into this business to self-publish," he explains. "I got in to do comics. Self-publishing was a means to do *Poison Elves*."

The first 12 Mulehide issues have just been released in two trade paperbacks by Sirius, and the last eight issues are to follow in two more trades by spring. The new title is up to #19, with issue #1 already in its second print.

The Sirius title opened a new chapter in Lusiphur's life. It is told by his longtime elfin friend, Jace Sarn Lanargaith, who's writing a journal of their adventures 11 years earlier. It opens with Jace explaining that Lusiphur has been dead for a year, but is still actively wanted by the authorities, setting the tone for the weirdness to come.

While Hayes kept the Sirius series within the Mulehide continuity, he did make a few changes upon joining Sirius. "I decided to change the storytelling style to make it a little more novel-like," he says. "The story is going to get more complicated, and I wanted a mechanism where I could explain things in flashbacks when I needed to."

Lusiphur's current adventures revolve around the people he meets in Sanctuary, a sort of other-dimensional hideaway for a guild of elfin assassins. The leaders, Morach and Talon, allow him to join after a trial by combat with their most-skilled assassin, the red-headed bombshell Cassandra. Naturally, the two fall in love. They also find themselves hunted by Lieutenant Vido of the Blood Guard, who is aided by his right-hand man, the aforementioned Jace Sarn Lanargaith.

Some of the inspiration for Lusiphur's characterization derives from Hayes' own background, including a two-year stint of

being homeless while in his late teens. "I ate from dumpsters," he wrote in the creator's note in *Poison Elves* (vol. 1) #19. "I slept in condemned houses in the dead of winter."

Today, he says, "People who know me can see a little bit of [my life] in things that happen in the book, but I don't tell any stories based on my experiences. It's mostly a matter that at 17, I thought I knew everything, and I wound up on the streets and found out how little I knew. That comes through more as an attitude Lusiphur has than a story I put in the comic. Everybody goes through crap in his or her life, but you've just gotta take it and do something with it. It's not a flag you should be out there waving all the time."

One place Hayes' outlook shines through, he admits, is in Lusiphur's relationship with Cassandra. Mutehide fans noticed that Lusiphur liked dark, "witchy"-looking women. He even married one: Hyena, a sorceress with long black hair, lots of mascara and a wardrobe Vampirella would die for. But Cassandra is a tall, red-headed elf who has her head screwed on amazingly well, especially for an assassin.

"Lusiphur's been beaten up pretty bad through his life," Hayes says. "But now—and this is so autobiographical it's sickening—he's at a point where he's realized that unhealthy relationships are not good for him. So he's reaching out to someone he could form a good relationship with." (Readers of the series' opening notes know Hayes went through a divorce in 1994 and has since remarried.)

The impact of Lusiphur's inability to trust someone else will come to a head soon, Hayes says. "He's sarcastic about his relationship with Cassy and never says he loves her, but she's so damn good that she understands it. And that just freaks him out more. Now it's a question of whether he's too far gone to sustain a relationship with a healthy, normal person." (For more on what's ahead, see the sidebar.)

Lusiphur is a little mellower and less sarcastic than in earlier issues, Hayes notes. "He's part of an organization that he cares about, and he has a significant other that he's very close to. His humor springs from his cynicism, and he's not very cynical right now because everything is going so well. Of course, with my sado-masochistic nature, I'm going to start abusing him soon and he'll get his cynicism back."

"Readers freak out when they see that my elves look sad. They aren't little pansy fairy elves."
—Drew Hayes

Helping lighten the atmosphere are several supporting characters. "I consider my characters to be like a deck of cards," he says. "And I do love my jokers." One recurring bad apple is the woman-hating Purple Marauder, a caped crusader with a bad fashion sense and a superiority complex. He hounds Lusiphur, bellowing out challenges and then eluding the enraged elf. "He's the only character [with whom] I've played by ear. I haven't thought of anything to explain him; that's just the way he is. He's kind of the unbridled, misogynist side of me that doesn't have these second thoughts about maybe these aren't constructive things to say."

A second joker is Parintachin, a jester-like character who appears to Lusiphur in his dreams to help him work things out. "I wanted to have someone who could sit on the sidelines and explain things in clearer terms and set up situations faster," Hayes explains. "He's a mechanism, but he's also fun. If things have gone way too serious for too long, I'll do an issue with him or the Marauder to lighten things up." They receive back-up comedic support with the introduction in issue #19 of Scuzz and Scum, a pair of thieves who are clearly out of their league around the assassins. Their secret weapon? They never bathe.

Readers know that a direct confrontation with Jace looms somewhere ahead. "Their destinies are intertwined," Hayes says. "Jace comes from a structured background in which society instilled many of its beliefs in him. Lusiphur came from the streets and will break him of some of those beliefs. Jace, in turn, will teach Lusiphur some compassion and internal wisdom—which he very rarely uses."

Hayes always has the book mapped out tightly for the next six issues, and has many longer-term plans set. The Sanctuary tale will continue until about issue #50, then a few "snippets of life" will follow before Lusiphur heads off on another longer adventure.

But for the more immediate future, Hayes will be having some real fun with Lusiphur. "Within the next year or so, there's going to be something happening that will totally change Lusiphur's life," he says. "It's a physical, permanent change—totally unexpected by anybody—and it puts Lusiphur into a drastically different position. God, I wish I could tell you what it is, because I can't wait for readers to see it."

That results in a new outlook for Lusiphur and more insight for readers into the dark elf. Hayes reveals, "His life will get thrown over onto its back and all the little things that live under it are going to be exposed. But he's not going to become solemn. He's still going to be as nasty and loud-mouthed as he ever was."

Craig Shutt, who fills you in on the future of "Heroes Reborn" elsewhere in this issue, thinks Lusiphur could beat both Elfquest's *Cutter and the Reeder elf. Together. Blindfolded. With a plunger.*

What's Ahead

[illegible]

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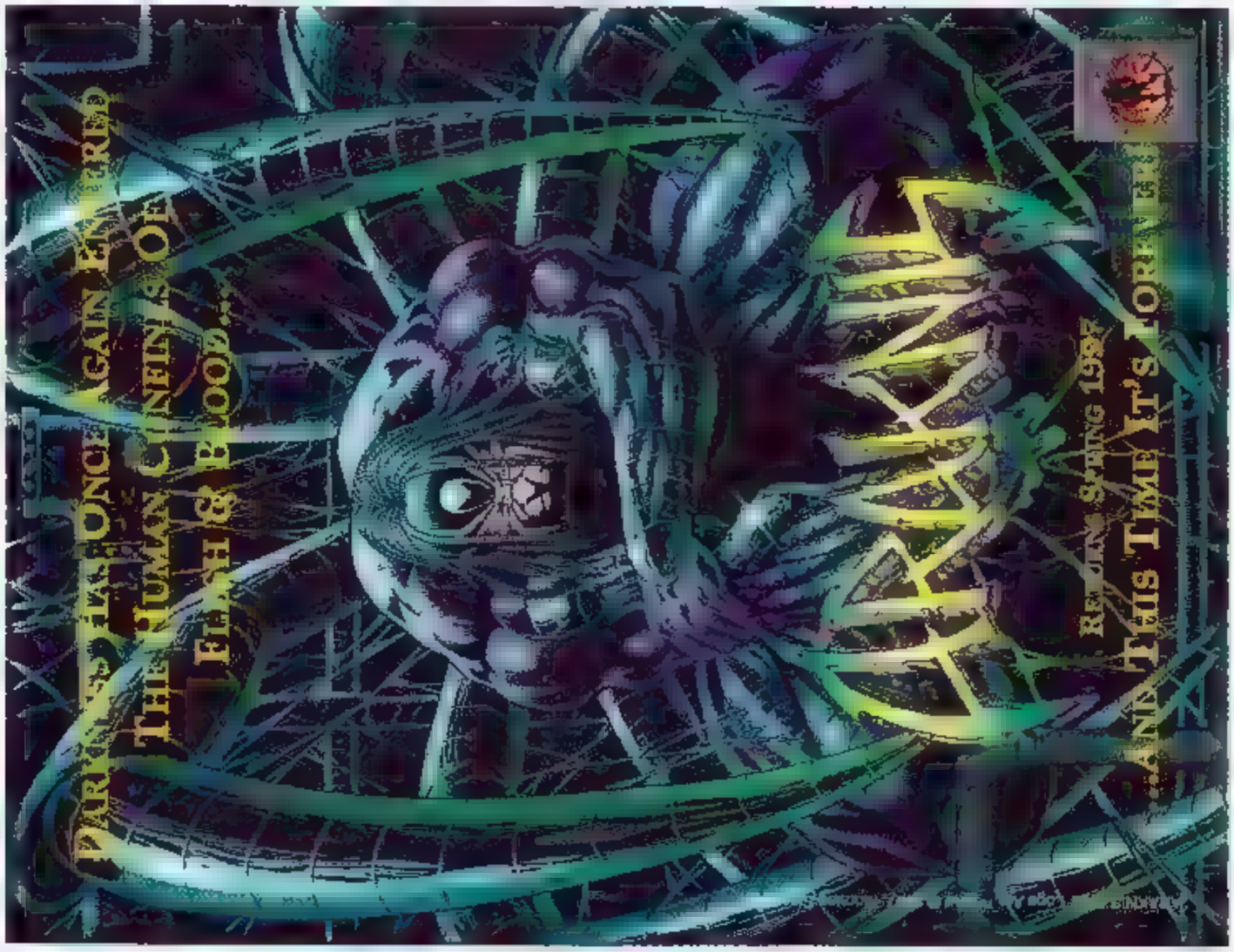
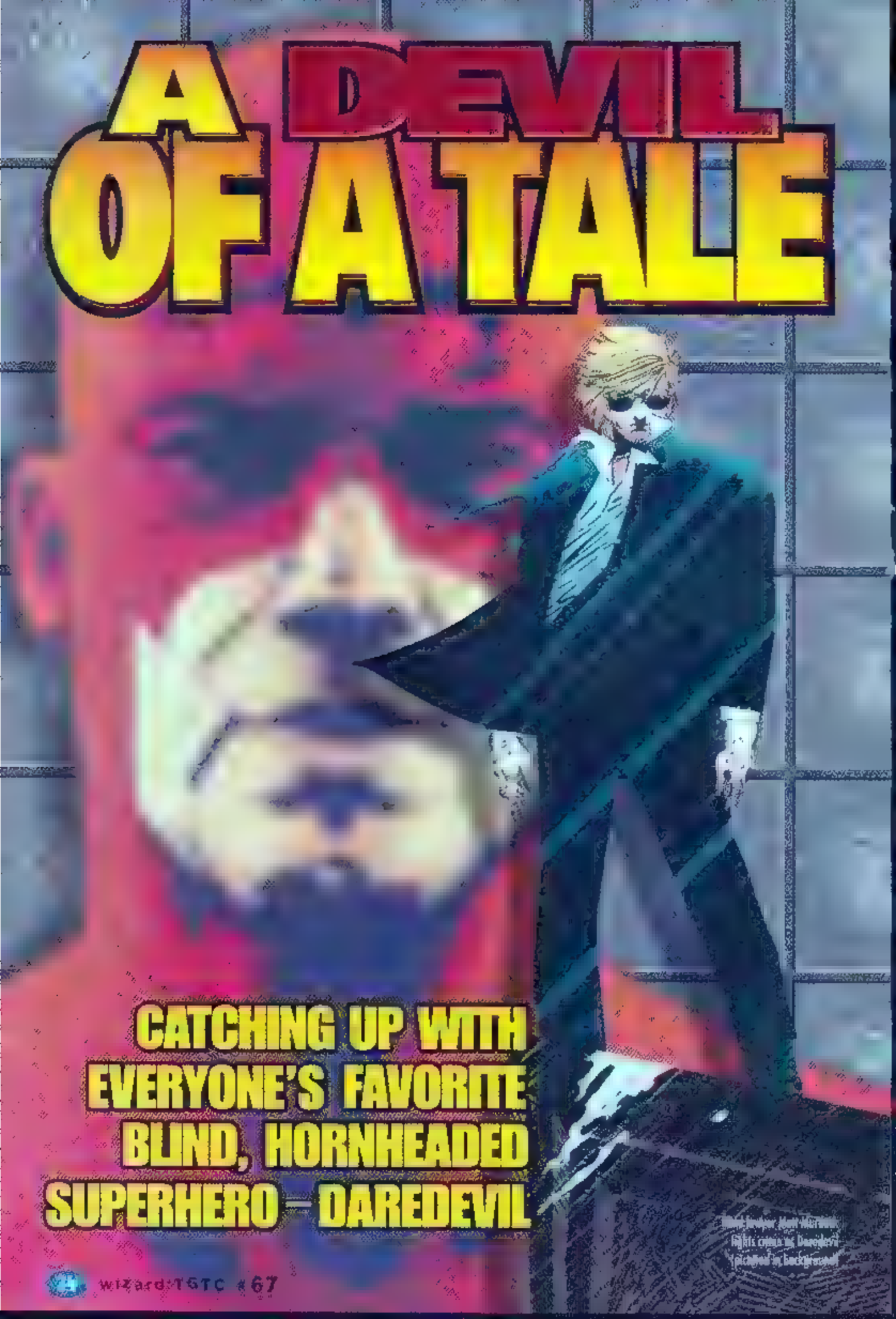


A DEVIL OF A TALE

CATCHING UP WITH EVERYONE'S FAVORITE BLIND, HORNHEADED SUPERHERO – DAREDEVIL



DD MATTHEW MURDOCK

This guy is tough as nails. Over his 30-year history, Daredevil has gone from a merry crime-fighting prankster to an obsessed, masked vigilante to a schizophrenic with multiple personalities, back to a wise-cracking hornhead. Does it show? Nope. Like we said, the guy takes a licking but keeps on ticking.

Sure, Daredevil's had his share of ups and downs. But he always bounces back, better than before, and twice as determined to stop crime. So, without further ado, let's look at what's happened in DD's 30 years to make him the way he is.

The Kid From Hell's Kitchen

Born and raised in the New York neighborhood known as "Hell's Kitchen," Matthew Murdock was the son of "Battling Jack" Murdock, an alcoholic prize fighter who still dreamt of glory, but had turned to working as a mob enforcer for the Fixer in order to provide for his son.

Having sworn to Matt's mother to make a better life for his son than the one he himself led, Jack Murdock taught Matt never to fight, and strongly pushed him into academics. However, after being repeatedly harassed by bullies who mocked him with the name "Daredevil," Matt began training in secret, becoming an expert fighter and gymnast without his father's approval or knowledge.

One day, seeing an old man walking directly in the path of an out-of-control truck, Matt leapt to save the man. Unbeknownst to Matt, the truck was carrying drums of radioactive waste, which came crashing out of the skidding truck. One of the drums burst open and splashed some of its waste right into Matt's eyes, blinding him.

Instead of being crippled for life, however, the radioactive waste heightened Matt's remaining senses to an incredible degree. Suddenly, Matt was able to hear a single heartbeat, smell a scent as an animal would, feel printed ink on paper and sense where objects and people were, due to a mysterious "radar" sense.

Shortly after the accident, Matt met a mysterious blind man named Stick who taught him how to use his powers and trained him in the martial arts.

Meanwhile, Matt's father was sinking deeper and deeper into organized crime. Late one night, after refusing to throw a boxing match and have his son ashamed of him, Jack Murdock was murdered by the Fixer and his men. Enraged, Matt hunted down and savagely beat most of the Fixer's men one by one. When Matt finally cornered the Fixer, the mobster suffered a massive heart attack and died.

While chasing the last of the Fixer's men, Matt got into a fight with a group of prostitutes who were trying to protect the man, and accidentally pushed one of them through a window to her death. The tragedy scarred Matt, and drove him to make sure that no innocents would ever be hurt by his actions again.

Matt went on to study law at Columbia University, where he met his best friend Franklin "Foggy" Nelson. Also during his time at Columbia, Matt met the enigmatic Elektra Natchios, daughter of the Greek ambassador to the United States. Attracted to her free spirit, Matt and Elektra became lovers, sharing many private moments together. Their happiness was not destined to last, however, and Elektra left for parts unknown after the brutal murder of her father, convinced that the laws she studied and cherished were useless.

Matt Murdock during his college years (above); DD's mysterious mentor, Stick (below)

A Life Illuminated

Always seeking justice, Matt got caught up in a child-slavery ring when a young street girl Matt befriended was kidnapped. Wearing a mask to conceal his identity, he destroyed the child-slavery ring which, incidentally, was run by New York's newest crime lord, the Kingpin. While Matt and the Kingpin never met face to face, a seed of enmity was planted between the two which would grow into a strong hatred over the years. Shortly thereafter, Matt adopted a red-and-yellow costume and publicly appeared as the superhero Daredevil. He soon, however, changed his costume to a deep red version.

After graduation, Matt started a law practice with Foggy Nelson, and the two hired the sexy Karen Page (whom Matt later confided in with his secret identity) as their secretary. For many years, the firm of Murdock & Nelson would represent the superhero community, high-profile cases and the average joe.

In the early days of his crimefighting career, Daredevil was a laughing fixture on the New York scene, the swashbuckler of the new crop of superheroes. In terms of wise-cracking, DD was second only to Spider-Man, and often got involved in ridiculous situations both as Daredevil and as Matt Murdock.

The Dark Years

As the years passed, however, things slowly began to change for Daredevil. Fighting crime was no longer the fun escape it used to be. Criminals were becoming more ruthless and personal in their attacks against him.

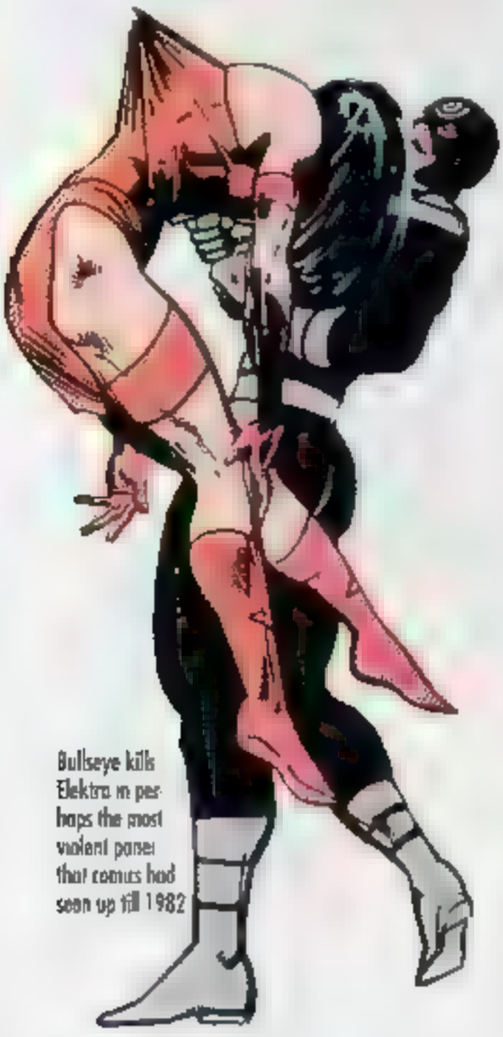
These changes started taking their toll when Bullseye, the Kingpin's former head assassin, kidnapped the Black Widow in an attempt to lure DD to him. Daredevil defeated

Bullseye and freed the Widow, but at the same time, he realized that the stakes in the game had been raised. The days of the laughing Daredevil were coming to a close.

More and more often, DD found himself fighting those who were much stronger and more powerful than he was. Displaying incredible amounts of courage, Daredevil fought on, even though these battles often nearly cost him his life.

While recovering in the hospital from a brutal beating by the Hulk, Daredevil was confronted by Ben Urich, a chain-smoking reporter for the *Daily Bugle*. Urich had begun putting together facts about Daredevil and Matt Murdock, and slowly became convinced that the two were actually the same man. When confronted with the evidence, Matt confessed, telling the reporter about his father, his youth and how he became Daredevil. Knowing that running the story would ruin Matt's life and destroy Daredevil's career, Urich burned the manuscript, an act that forged an unbreakable friendship between the two.

During this grim period, Elektra once again returned, this time as a freelance bounty hunter entrenched in a war with The Hand, a ninja cult that had trained her years before. While their paths crossed several times, a new tension existed between the former lovers, and many of their encounters led to savage battles. Looking out for only herself and her own interests, Elektra climbed the ladder of underworld power and became the Kingpin's new chief assassin, a move that brought her to the attention of Bullseye, who was rotting away in prison.



Bullseye kills Elektra in perhaps the most violent panel that comics had seen up till 1982

When Bullseye heard that Elektra had replaced him as the Kingpin's chief assassin, he escaped from prison, intent on killing her and proving to the Kingpin that he couldn't be replaced.

Elektra and Bullseye's battle raged across most of New York City, and Bullseye slowly gained the upper hand. In the end, Bullseye mortally wounded Elektra with her own sais, but she still had the strength to crawl to Matt's brownstone apartment, where she died in his arms.

Nearly insane with grief, Daredevil hunted Bullseye down, battling him to a standstill. In the final moment of battle, DD was forced to drop Bullseye from a great height when Bullseye tried to stab him with one of Elektra's sais. The impact shattered his spine.

Elektra's death profoundly affected Matt, driving him to the edge of insanity when he became convinced that she was still alive. Foggy, the Black Widow and many of Daredevil's friends became concerned for his sanity when, in a desperate attempt to prove she was still alive, he dug up Elektra's grave, only to find her moldering corpse. Matt was shattered by the revelation.

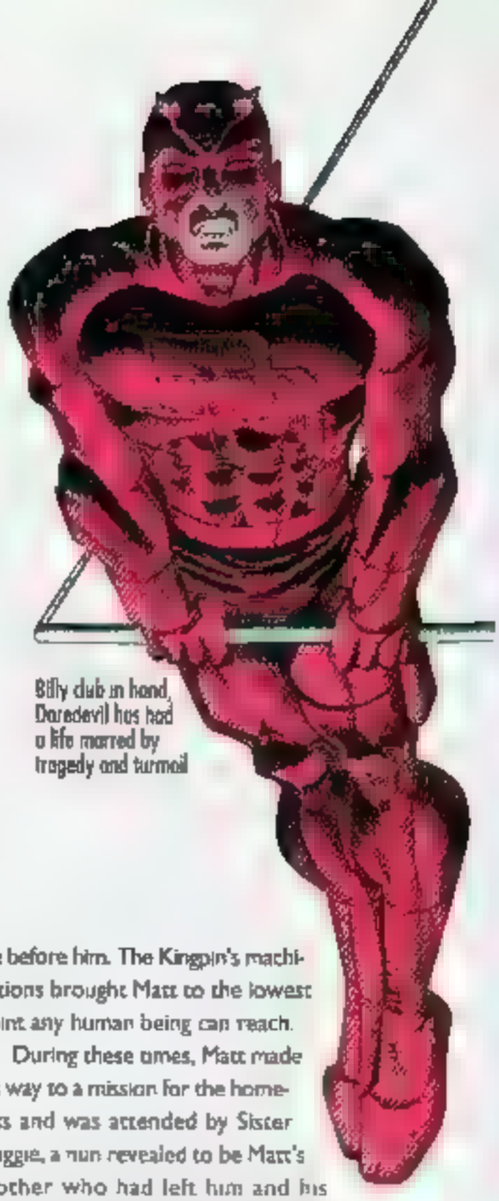
Daredevil took to the streets like never before. The simple, petty crime of the garish costumed villains of his early career seemed gone forever as he tackled new problems of the times—including drugs and the prevalence of handguns among teenagers—always acting as a thorn in the Kingpin's side.

Matt ultimately recovered from Elektra's death, using a terrifying game of Russian roulette to settle his score with the paralyzed Bullseye. Matt's gun had no bullets, however and Matt proclaimed that the two were stuck with each other, since he couldn't bring himself to kill Bullseye.

Slowly, Matt felt his life returning to some semblance of normalcy. He had a new girlfriend, Glorianna O'Breen, and his law practice was humming along smoothly. As Daredevil, he felt he was beginning to make a difference in New York and around the world, as various cases took him to England, Ireland and Italy.

Born Again

But not for long. While Matt rebuilt his life, Karen Page, his former confidante and current porn star, sold Daredevil's secret identity to one of the Kingpin's underlings for a hit of heroin. Unable to pass up the opportunity to crush his most hated enemy, the Kingpin proceeded to systematically destroy Matt Murdock's life. Matt saw his law career, finances, friends and apartment building literally crumble before him. The Kingpin's machinations brought Matt to the lowest point any human being can reach.



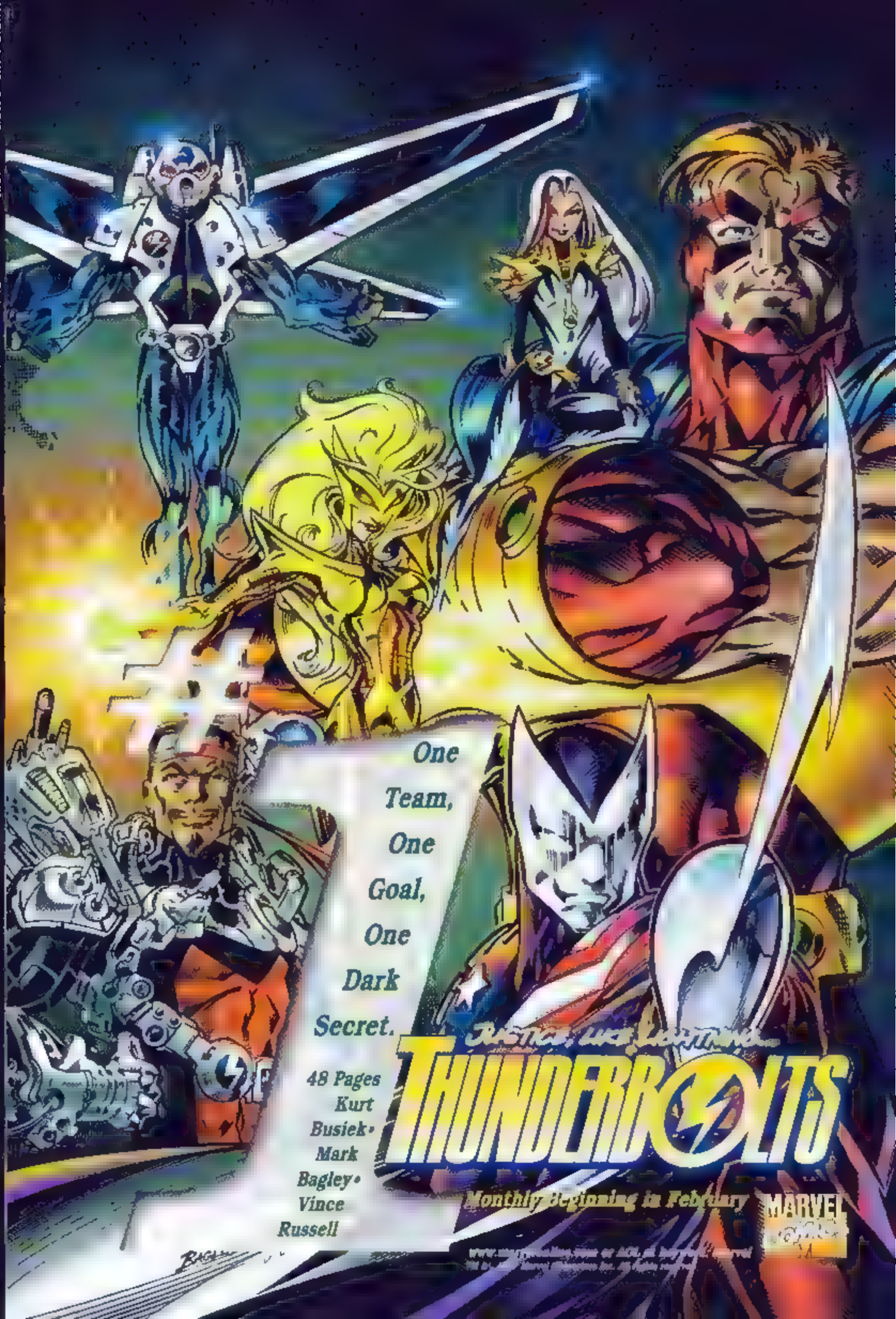
Billy club in hand, Daredevil has had a life marred by tragedy and turmoil

During these times, Matt made his way to a mission for the homeless and was attended by Sister Maggie, a nun revealed to be Matt's mother who had left him and his father years before. Matt fully recovered and was able to implicate the Kingpin in the mass destruction of several city blocks by the drug-augmented mercenary named Nuke. When the dust settled, Matt still had his hand in the courtroom, not as a lawyer, but as an aide to a free public law clinic. Once again, he slowly picked up the pieces of his broken life. With Karen at his side, Matt resettled in Hell's Kitchen, intent on keeping it clean.

Months after the Kingpin's destruction of his life, Daredevil was able to even the scales with the crime lord, unseating him from his position of power in New York's underworld. The District Attorney and he had proven to the world that the Kingpin wasn't just a humble exporter of spices, but also the East Coast's biggest crime lord. Matt was vindicated when it was proven that he was wrongfully disbarred, and was quickly allowed to practice law once again. (Incidentally, he opened his law office in the Kingpin's former skyscraper headquarters.)

The Weird Years

A major turning point in Matt's life came during a battle with his demonically created evil duplicate known as Hellspawn (created during *The Infinity War* mini-series). During the conflict, Matt's secret identity was made public and he was forced to fake his own death, change his costume to a black, bladed version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and go into hiding, where he adopted the identity of Jack Batlin, in homage to his father. (Amidst this storyline, Elektra was discovered to be a ve. Don't ask—it's a long story.)

Following the death of Hellspawn, Matt kept the Batlin moniker and continued fighting crime in his red-and-black, "razor" costume. Meanwhile, a Daredevil wearing the original yellow-and-red costume had started fighting crime in New York, telling everyone that he was the real Daredevil. This yellow-and-red Daredevi broke into Matt's empty apartment and shredded the black costume, forcing Matt to return to his original, red costume.

t was later revealed that the different costumed Daredevils were actually all one person: Matt Murdock himself, who had split personalities with each costume. The multiple personalities stemmed from when young Matt knocked the young prostitute out the window to her death. He finally confronted them all with the aid of Sister Maggie, and came to terms with his different personas, merging them all into one.

Now & Later

Since re-integrating his personality fragments, Matt has re-evaluated his life and resumed the role of Daredevil, with a happier outlook on life. He has also convinced the public that he isn't Daredev and has resumed his life as blind lawyer Matt Murdock. Matt and Foggy, who recently earned that Matt's Daredevil have taken positions with the prestigious Sharpe Law Firm, headed by Foggy's mother, Rosalind Sharpe. Matt's first case with the firm was defending Mr. Hyde against murder charges, charges that Matt knew Hyde was innocent of (thanks to Hyde's steady heartbeat, indicating that he wasn't lying). Matt got Hyde acquitted, but as Daredevil, Matt later let Hyde know that he'd be watching him *very* closely from now on, and he'd be the one to bring Hyde to justice the next time he committed a crime.

Daredevil's also had to pick up the slack left by the disappearance of the Avengers and the Fantastic Four (who vanished during the recent "Onslaught" crossover), and face the Enforcers, Mysterio and the Absorbing Man.

And let's not forget the presence of the Kingpin. Never remaining down for long, the Kingpin has recently begun crawling back out of the woodwork to slowly regain his place in the crime world. And you can be sure that Daredevil is tops on his list to eliminate.

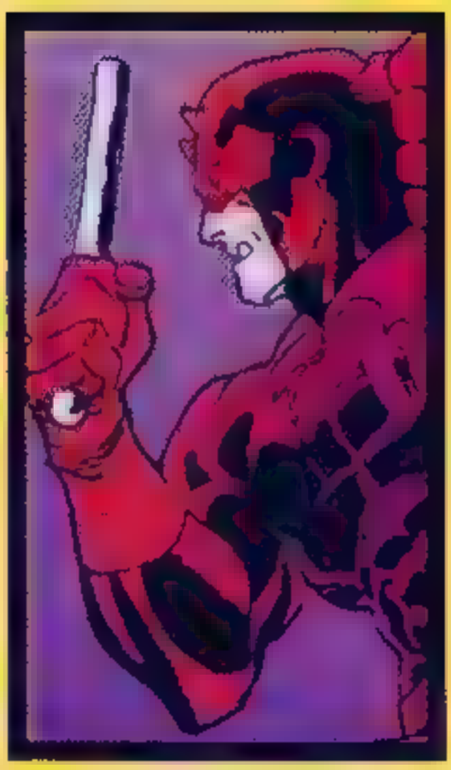
Despite these worries, Murdock's life seems to be finally stable.

"He's pretty happy with himself right now," says current *Daredevil* writer Karl Kesel. "All of his problems are external. They're problems dealing with Foggy, Karen or Razor, not himself like he's had before."

And as for DD's future? "The guy's been from the highest highs to the lowest lows," Kesel says. "His life may just stay stable for the next little bit, but don't worry, he'll be keeping busy. It's just now, there might be a smile on his face while he's fighting crime." ▼

[illegible] who reviewed James Robin[illegible] had his life destroyed [illegible] However, he's taking donations [illegible] man down fake, too.

Daredevil is the lone hero with enough savvy to take down the Kingpin (left)



the Devil, he Does

Like any good hero, Daredevil possess a collection of pretty keen powers and abilities. Guided by current *Daredevil* scribe Karl Kesel, here's the lowdown on them.

• **FIGHTING SKILLS**—Daredevil's unique fighting style combines boxing, gymnastics, Ninjutsu, Judo and other martial arts. "What it boils down to is survival-type street fighting," Kesel says.

• **TOUCH**—DD's heightened sense of touch allows him to "read" print on paper by feeling the particular impressions of the ink. Despite what has been shown in past issues, Kesel says that DD can't make out a picture or color by touch. "C'mon, the guy has to have limits," Kesel laughs.

• **SMELL**—His heightened sense of smell allows Daredevil to determine such indistinguishable things as the separate ingredients in food or the identity of a person based on the way their cologne reacts with their body chemistry.

• **HEARING**—Aware of the slightest sound around him, Daredevil can hear the sound of a human heartbeat from yards away. Unfortunately, due to his heightened sense of hearing, DD can be stunned or even injured by extremely loud sounds. (DD can also concentrate on any specific stimulus, blocking out all others. For example, he can hear a specific heartbeat across a crowded room.)

• **RADAR SENSE**—DD's most peculiar power allows him to determine the proximity and shape of objects around him. His "vision," thanks to this radar sense, consists of faint, fuzzy outlines of the people and places around him. Also, Kesel points out that just as tinfoil strips can jam conventional radar, a heavy rainstorm could jam DD's radar sense. ■ *MB*

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AFTER WRITING THE BIBLE ON JAPANESE COMICS, FREDERIK L. SCHODT GIVES *WIZARD* A QUICK CULTURE LESSON

Major Motoko Kusanagi from Ghost in the Shell

MANGA MAN

By Michael O'Connell

"Japanese comics offer more than science fiction, giant robots and young girls with big eyes," says Frederik L. Schodt. At least, that's what the San Francisco-based author hopes to convince American audiences.

During the 1980s, Schodt wrote a monthly column on Japanese comics (or "manga") for the *Mainichi Daily*, Tokyo's English-language newspaper. As a translator, he helped bring stories like Masamune Shirow's *Orion* to American audiences. In 1983, Schodt became America's official "Manga Man" when his book *Manga! Manga! The World of Japanese Comics* first appeared. In it, Schodt traced the development of Japanese visual storytelling from the humorous drawings of a 12th century monk to the modern, novel-length tales pioneered by Osamu Tezuka in the 1940s.

In 1996, Stone Bridge Press released Schodt's eagerly awaited follow-up volume, *Dreamland Japan*. "It hasn't been a conscious chauvinism, but there's been this feeling that American comics [are] the only 'real' comics," Schodt admits. "It's only recently that people have been able to look outside of the United States."

Schodt's own interest in manga began in the early 1970s as a university student in Japan. "I noticed all my roommates weren't reading their textbooks," he says. "They were reading giant manga magazines. I started reading them and became hooked very quickly. For me, they were not only a way to have a good time and entertain myself, they were a great tool to learn the language and learn about Japanese popular culture."

The telephone-book-sized manga magazines that first grabbed Schodt's attention differed in several ways from American comic books. Most notably, they were read from right to left, typically contained several hundred pages of original material and were printed in black-and-white, though occasionally, a few pages were tinted with a single color. The latter practice was usually done to cover up "ghost images" from the cheap, recycled paper that the stories were printed on.

Yet, it wasn't the unusual format or size of these magazines that captured Schodt's interest, but the remarkable stories that they contained. "The most distinguishing aspect of comics in Japan are what they call the 'long story manga,'" he says. "One story may go into thousands of pages. Japanese artists actually decompressed storylines so that instead of trying to convey a lot of information on one page, they expanded it." In a sense, these manga magazines contained single "chapters" of many different graphic novels. Rather than limiting their stories to a few panels or pages, manga artists were stretching the narrative flow of their stories over many chapters. "It made it possible to incorporate many subtle, psychological depictions and focus on much more subtle aspects of storytelling," Schodt explains.

This unique form of storytelling, as well as the success of the entire Japanese comics industry, can be traced to one man: the late Osamu Tezuka. Americans know Tezuka primarily through his animation. In the 1950s, he created *Mighty Atom* (*Tetsuwan Atom*) and *Jungle Emperor* (*Jungle Taitei*) for the *Shoden* and *Manga Shonen* boys magazines. In the 1960s, he was instrumental in turning these creations into two animated series for television: "Astro Boy" and "Kimba, the White Lion."

In his lifetime, Tezuka drew over 50,000 pages of artwork and produced 500 different works. Though he created many significant series like *Mighty Atom*, *Jungle Emperor*, *Princess Knight*, *Phoenix*, *Black Jack* and *Adolf*, his greatest contribution to manga occurred in one of his earliest stories. Right after World War II, he abandoned the short comic-strip format that epitomized Japanese comics up to that time and produced a 200-page adaptation of Shichima Sakai's fantasy story "New Treasure Island." Tezuka introduced an expanded storyline and cinematic [illegible] into his layout. Whether by design or accident, he created the long story manga.

"[Tezuka] was a real genius," says Schodt, who served as the artist's interpreter and translator on several occasions. "He brought to the comic medium in Japan a whole other perspective. In another era, he wouldn't have become a manga artist, he certainly would have become a film or an animation director. In general, he was always pursuing something new in comics, whether it was a visual or storytelling technique." In the same manner that American comics legend Jack Kirby is affectionately remembered as "The King of Comics," Tezuka was awarded by his colleagues the honorific "Manga No Kamisama," or "God of Comics" for his contributions to the medium.

As Schodt's interest in this exciting visual medium grew, so did his desire to bring it to an American audience. "I thought that the first step would be to write a book," he says. "The main motivation was to get people to realize that there was this whole culture emerging in Japan that was totally different from what people were used to in the United States and Europe. It had implications for the potential of the comics medium."

Manga! Manga! is much more of a historical overview and a general introduction," Schodt says about his first book. "*Dreamland* is much more of a focused look at specific artists, trends and aspects of

their industry."

Writing both books has given Schodt a unique perspective on the differences between the American and Japanese comics industries. "The most obvious difference is volume," he says. "The Japanese industry has been much more clever at developing a symbiotic relationship with television, games and especially animation and the mainstream publishing world."

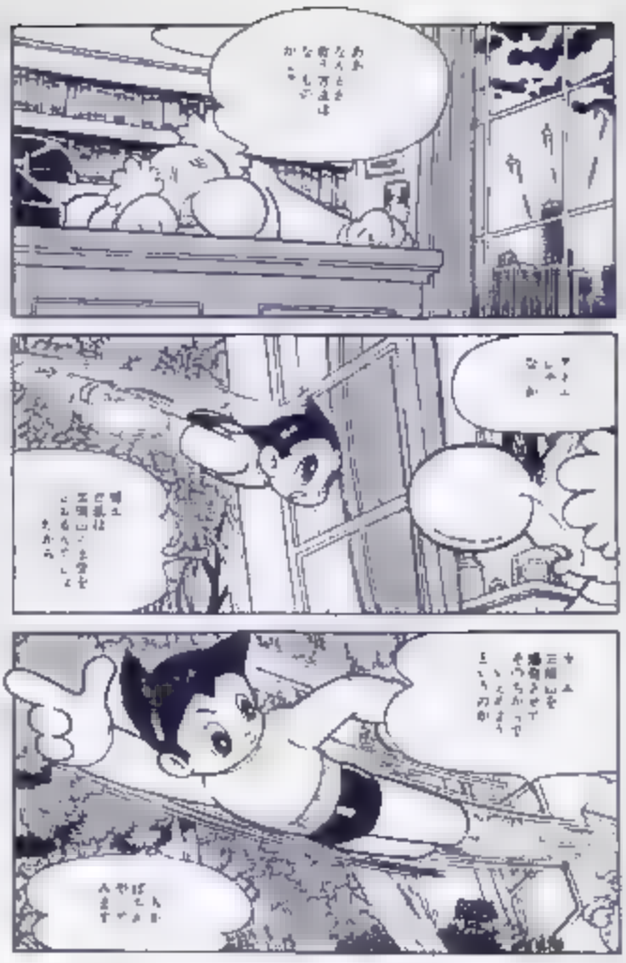
It's not unusual for a successful manga title to spawn video games, television series, novelizations and live-action or animated films. Typically an entire manga series will be collected in a high-quality, beautifully bound set of reprints and then sold in bookstores. These up-market reprints and the relative disposability of the cheaply printed originals have given Japan a very small market for back issues. Only in the last six or eight years has a collector's market started to emerge.

"It's not really as developed as the United States, but there definitely is a market, especially for works by famous artists," Schodt says. "I haven't heard of conventions of people who buy old comics. There are many comics conventions in Japan, but they're not conventions to sell old comics. They're generally conventions where fanzines are sold."

The largest and craziest conventions in Japan are those dealing with "dojinshi" or fanzines. A dojinshi convention may draw hundreds of thousands of fans together to buy, sell and trade their homemade manga. Unlike their American counterparts—which are usually cheaply produced—many Japanese fanzines can be quite expensive and feature professional quality printing.

"The fanzine conventions in Japan are mind-boggling," Schodt says. "When I went to the Super Comic City Convention at Tokyo's huge Harumi Trade Center in 1994, I was absolutely shocked. There were almost a quarter of a million people in one spot. It's almost like an alternate universe to the commercial manga market. There are publishers for the fanzine market. There are stores that cater to people creating the fanzines, selling paper and tools. We have nothing comparable."

Some amateur artists use the dojinshi as a stepping stone to the commercial manga industry. For others, it's a chance to express their own artistic voice. Topics range from parodies of popular animated series to adult themes. This wide variety mirrors much of what can be found in mainstream manga.



***Osamu Tezuka's* Mighty Atom (*which became the animated "Astro Boy"*)**

Newsstands are packed with manga about baseball, pachinko (a game similar to pinball), mahjong, science fiction, music and historical romance. Sarariman or "salary man" comics focus, often humorously, on the competitive Japanese business world. One NBA-sanctioned series followed the exploits of Magic Johnson and the L.A. Lakers. "In Japan, manga has become a full-fledged medium. It's just like going into a book or video store and having everything from cooking to the stock market," says Schodt.

The diversity of themes is no accident. Japanese publishers and editors have a large and diverse audience to cater to. Today, the most popular Japanese manga boast circulation figures exceeding 1 million copies per issue and many of these appear weekly or biweekly! Men and women of all ages read manga.

"There are only one or two areas left to develop in Japan," Schodt says. One of them is the senior citizen market. They grew up reading mostly newspaper comic strips and one-panel cartoons, not the long story manga. The only other area to be developed is not in Japan. It's overseas."

First Comics started the Japanese infiltration into the American comic book market in 1987 by reprinting *Lone Wolf and Cub*, a dark samurai saga created by Kazuo Koike and Goseki Kojima. Soon, Epic/Marvel, Dark Horse, Antarctic and Viz released their own manga titles. When manga-based animation like "Akira," "Ranma 1/2" and "Appleseed" started appearing in video stores, the Japanese comics invasion began in earnest.

Surprisingly, very little of Japan's greatest manga artist, Tezuka, has made its way across the Pacific. Only the brooding World War II drama *Adolf* has been published in the United States. Instead, American fans have been eagerly devouring the works of manga stars Katsuhiro Otomo (*Akira*), Masamune Shirow (*Appleseed*, *Ghost in the Shell*) and Rumiko Takahashi (*Ranma 1/2*, *Urusei Yatsura*).

It's easy for Schodt to understand why Otomo and Shirow, who specialize in gritty science fiction and fantasy stories, have become so popular in the U.S. "There's an established base of science fiction fans in America, whether it's comics, novels or films. It's obvious that a science fiction work would appeal to the market here. Also, both Otomo and Shirow draw in a more realistic style than has been traditionally shown in Japan." Because of the expanded nature of the long story manga, Japanese artists tend to draw in a sketchy, less detailed style than what is found in most American comics. Otomo and Shirow are exceptions to this rule.

"Certainly in terms of draftsmanship, American comic book artists in general have put a lot

Schodt's books: The Old and New Testaments of manga

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Visions
Visions

more emphasis on drawing people in the Greek [realistic] tradition," argues Schodt.

One hot artist drawing in a more traditional Japanese style is Rumiko Takahashi, creator of the *Ranma ½*, *Urusei Yatsura* and *Maison Ikkoku* comedy serials. "I thought the humor was far too alien for Americans," Schodt admits. "It's been a real pleasure to see something that I thought wouldn't work in the United States actually become quite popular."

In *Ranma ½*, Takahashi explodes the whole concept of gender roles by having characters switch sexes or species at the drop of a bucket. "Perhaps a couple of the reasons that it's so popular here is that it's very different from anything else that exists," Schodt says. "Also, the gender ambiguity aspect is very unusual for American readers. It's a light, fresh approach."

Though manga may be enjoying a renaissance among American fans, it's facing tough times at home. "The Japanese industry has actually got some real problems right now," Schodt says. "The industry has matured, and in some areas it's facing erosion of readership, especially among very young readers. There are a lot more things competing for time right now among young children, whether it's video games or animation."

Probably the most promising development of the manga invasion's "new" phase has been embraced by American comic book creators. Artists like Billy Tucci, Joe Madureira and Humberto Ramos have acknowledged the influence that Japanese comics and animation have had on their work. "There are many American artists influenced by manga today, and many who draw in an overtly manga style," Schodt says. "Adam Warren, who draws *Dirty Pair*, is an artist who very early began incorporating several Japanese styles. In fact, *Dirty Pair* was based on Japanese animation characters. I've looked at many of the works that are inspired by the Japanese style and I get a kick out of them. It's very easy to depict characters with larger eyes, but the best thing I've seen is that a lot of American artists are incorporating Japanese page layouts and experimenting with ways of depicting action and panel breakdowns. Ultimately, the storytelling techniques and the character depiction are what's most important."

If nothing else, Japanese manga has shown that the comics medium can be very different from what American audiences have come to expect. Perhaps this will encourage American fans to seek out other new and interesting sources of visual storytelling. "I actually hope that American readers not only read American and Japanese comics, but also the European comics which are really wonderful," Schodt says. "There are some really wonderful things being done out there. It's a broad world."

In Japan, Michael O'Connell is known by the honorific Bell No Kamisama, *or "God of Taco Bell."*

SURE SCHODT's

Frederik's Recommended Manga

"What manga should someone read?" That's a question Frederik L. Schodt, author of *Manga! Manga! The World of Japanese Comics* and *Dreamland Japan*, is frequently asked. "I always ask them to first remember that first their line of interest and concentrate on that," he says. With a little goading, however, Schodt picked these 10 titles as the best English-translated manga available.

Adolf (Cadence)
Osamu Tezuka brilliantly weaves together the lives of three people named Adolf. Two are friends growing up in Japan during the 1930s and one is the dictator of Germany. "It's a really good example of how manga in Japan uses a novelistic format. It's a great place to start."

Barefoot Gen (Penguin Books)
Keiji Nakazawa's gripping, semi-autobiographical account of the bombing of Hiroshima. "Originally a children's story, it shows how people can convey a very powerful message in a children's medium."

Battle Angel Alita (Viz Communications)
A visually stunning science fiction story about a girl cyborg and her father. Sort of Pinocchio-meets-"Blade Runner." "For people who like science fiction and comics, it has a very interesting approach."

Crime and Punishment (Japan Times — in English with Japanese captions)
"God of Manga" Tezuka tackles Dostoyevsky's metaphysical detective story about a murderer's struggle with guilt and redemption. "One of Tezuka's very early works. It's very difficult to [find] in the United States, but in Japan, it's in all the English-language bookstores."

Domu (Dark Horse Comics)
A crazy old man and a young girl wage psychic battle for control of a Tokyo apartment complex. "*Akira* is one of Katsuhiro Otomo's best manga works. It's very tight and cinematic."

Four Shojo Stories (Viz)
Four studies in science fiction, fantasy and human relationships by female artists Keiko Nobumoto, Rieko Saiga and Shio Sato. "Although half of the manga in Japan is for women and created by women, the works that are translated over here tend to be for males. This is what that half of the population in Japan is reading."

Ghost in the Shell (Dark Horse)
Masamune Shirow's android cop fights corruption and a mad computer-mind in a futuristic Tokyo. "Shirow creates a very unusual style for Japan. It's much more adventure-driven than most Japanese comics."

Nausicaä of the Valley of Wind (Viz)
A compelling ecological parable by animation director Hayao Miyazaki ("My Neighbor Totoro"). "It's very appealing to Americans in particular who like long, intricate stories, like *Dune* and 'The Lord of the Rings.'"

Orion (Dark Horse)
Masamune Shirow's twisted tale of magicians attempting to arrest "bad karma" from the universe. "Shirow at his best. He's got a little bit of Tesla, Shinto, quantum physics and everything in this great spoof of mythology."

Ranma ½ (Viz)
When doused with water, Rumiko Takahashi's macho martial artist Ranma changes into a girl in this humorous manga. "There are a lot of great comedy stories in Japan, and Rumiko Takahashi is a master." ■ *AW*

It's a small step from childhood to Hell.

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Illustrated by
PETER GROSS
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The final story arcs of "Heroes Reborn" all lead to Galactus

THE SECOND HALF

Silver Surfer's arrival will impact all four titles

JIM LEE AND ROB LIEFELD HEAD INTO THE HOME STRETCH OF 'HEROES REBORN'

BY CRAIG SHUTT

And you thought they would screw up everything, didn't you?

"Heroes Reborn," the four-title experiment in which Jim Lee and Rob Liefeld rebooted classic Marvel Comics characters, has reached the halfway point with a bang. Fans have already had the rug pulled out from under them when it comes to who these heroes are in the "Reborn" universe: This time around, Fantastic Four mainstays Sue and Johnny Storm are corporate executives at a huge aerospace company owned by their father. Tony Stark was partly responsible for Bruce Banner becoming the Hulk; The Avengers are all S.H.I.E.L.D. agents. And that's just the tip of the iceberg for the four titles—*Fantastic Four, Iron Man, Captain America* and *Avengers*—which are showing lifelong fans of these classic Marvel characters that nothing is or will be what it seems...or what it used to be, for that matter.

Coming together February's the four-part "Industrial Revolution" crossover each series wraps up initial storylines and sends the heroes off again. But to where this time? Back to the Marvel Universe? Or someplace entirely different?

Rob Liefeld, director of *Captain America* and *Avengers*, promises that things are only getting started. "We had to set up a lot of stuff, so it took us a few issues to introduce everything and really get into a groove," he says. "But now that's done. We're going to turn it up significantly and have a lot of fun with it. When we started out, the readers' attitude was 'Show me.' And I firmly believe that by issue #6 [for all the titles], we'll have shown people that these books are entertaining and they should be picking them up."

The crossover wraps up the first arcs and offers a good jumping-on point for new readers intrigued by what they've been hearing. Here's a look at where things stand, where the books are going and what the creators are thinking as they head into the second half.

FANTASTIC FOUR

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW: Reed Richards, Ben Grimm, and Sue and Johnny Storm receive fantastic powers when they rocket into space in an unshielded prototype ship and are bombarded by cosmic rays. Their original ship was commandeered by S.H.I.E.L.D. agent Wyatt Wingfoot, who is a double-agent working for Doctor Doom. All want to examine a space anomaly closing in on Earth.

But Wingfoot is really a Skrull who kidnapped the real agent and took his place in order to steal the anomaly from Doom when the time was right. The Skrull-Wingfoot retrieves the anomaly for Doom when it lands on Earth, but the FF confront Doom in his Latverian castle and battle him to a stalemate. During the melee, the anomaly is revealed to be the Silver Surfer, the herald of Galactus, a planet-devouring entity headed for Earth.

WHAT'S GONNA HAPPEN: This one's got it all, True Believers! Lee promises to tell individual stories dealing with the Negative Zone, the Inhumans and other classic Fantastic Four elements.

These stories all lead up to the coming of Galactus and how that's tied into the Mole Man, the Inhumans, the Silver Surfer, the Skrulls and everything else. Galactus' arrival will impact all four books, as all the heroes join together to stop him. It also will reunite what *Iron Man* writer Scott Lobdell calls "The Knights of the Atomic Table" classmates Reed Richards, Victor Von Doom, Tony Stark, Bruce Banner and Henry Pym.

THE BOTTOM LINE: "The pacing slows after the first six issues, which is the big story of why Doom and Reed are competing and why Doom is always trying to screw Reed over," Lee explains. "What I really liked about the early *FF* was that things were always moving. Admittedly, maybe I went a little faster in the first three issues than I should have, but in my mind it was all one story. I wish I could have done it all in one issue."

IRON MAN

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW: Bruce Banner, an employee of Stark International, is tricked into letting the terrorist organization HYDRA detonate his invention, the gamma bomb. Banner contains the blast but absorbs so much radiation he becomes a big green Hulk (kids: don't try this at home). Arriving as the bomb goes off, owner Tony Stark is hit by exploding shrapnel. He dons an experimental armor suit that saves his life and gives him great powers, but it requires a constant infusion of electrical power and must remain linked to him forever.

Iron Man nearly dies fighting the Hulk, but is saved by his former secretary, Pepper Potts. But Stark's troubles are just starting. HYDRA hires a super-assassin called Whirlwind to eliminate Iron Man, while a man Stark has abused turns himself into the Living Laser and vows revenge. Depressed about becoming such a self-serving bastard, Stark joins the Avengers, the group he has helped fund, just in time for their big showdown with the Hulk on Avengers Island.

WHAT'S GONNA HAPPEN: Stark learns that the Hulk is really his friend Banner and, coupled with his commitment to the Avengers, he begins to redeem himself. In *Iron Man #9* flashbacks will show more about Rebel, the man who died testing the Prometheus armor in issue #1. Along the way Stark's doctor, Leonard Samson, learns the true identity of Iron Man, which S.H.I.E.L.D. agent Jasper Sitwell wants to force out of Samson. Sitwell injects Samson with a gamma-based isotope, with unforeseen results. Meanwhile, Liz Ross learns the exact nature of the terrible price she must pay for being at the site where the gamma bomb exploded.

THE BOTTOM LINE: "Many of the villains are corporate bad guys attacking Stark, not Iron Man," Lee points out, which gives Tony more to worry about than most superheroes. "The Hulk won't be fading into the background," he adds. "To make Iron Man a stronger book, he needed a counterpoint, his own version of the joker. He also needed a reason to exist, some guilt to work through. Hulk and Iron Man are tied together." Adds Lobdell, "In many ways, the book is both of theirs."

Pepper Potts won't fade away, either. "I see her as Sandra Bullock in 'Speed,'" Lobdell says. "Tony could no more get by as a superhero without her as he can get by as a CEO without her. If this were the 1970s, when books were called *Captain America & The Falcon* and *Daredevil & The Black Widow*, this book would be called *Iron Man & Pepper Potts*."

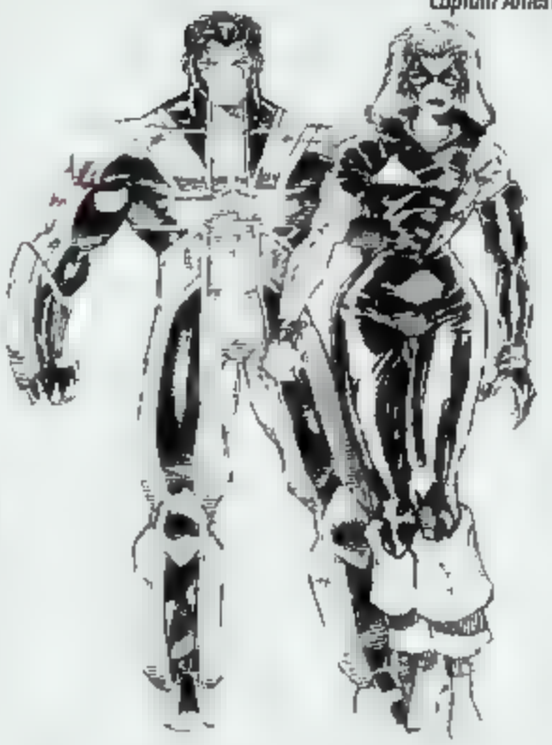
CAPTAIN AMERICA

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW: Steelworker Steve Rogers discovers that the life he's been living is a lie. At the instruction of President Truman shortly after the end of World War II, Cap was programmed with memories of a fake life to make him forget that he'd ever been the shield-slinger, and the super-soldier serum has been keeping him young ever since.

Reuniting with his shield, Cap awakens just in time to join with Nick Fury's S.H.I.E.L.D. to combat the World Party, a neo-Nazi group run by the Red Skull and his pal, Master Man. Helping Cap are Sam Wilson, a superpowered former jet pilot code-named Falcon, and Rikki Barnes, a teenage girl who takes on the mantle of Bucky and joins a junior S.H.I.E.L.D. agents program against Cap's wishes.

WHAT'S GONNA HAPPEN: Issues #7 and #8 take Cap to England, where he meets Union Jack, Namor and other members of the Invaders, the group he fought beside during WWII. Then #9-#11, penciled by Stephen Platt (*Prophet*), will focus on Cap's experiences in WWII with Sgt. Fury and the Howling Commandos. According to Liefeld, the story will have an "X-Files" twist with an alien landing, Hitler and Nazis. The new Bucky gets a solo shot in issue #11, and #12 features that big guy named Galactus.

Iron Man (below, left) gears up for Doc Samson, while Union Jack and Spitfire (below) visit *Captain America*



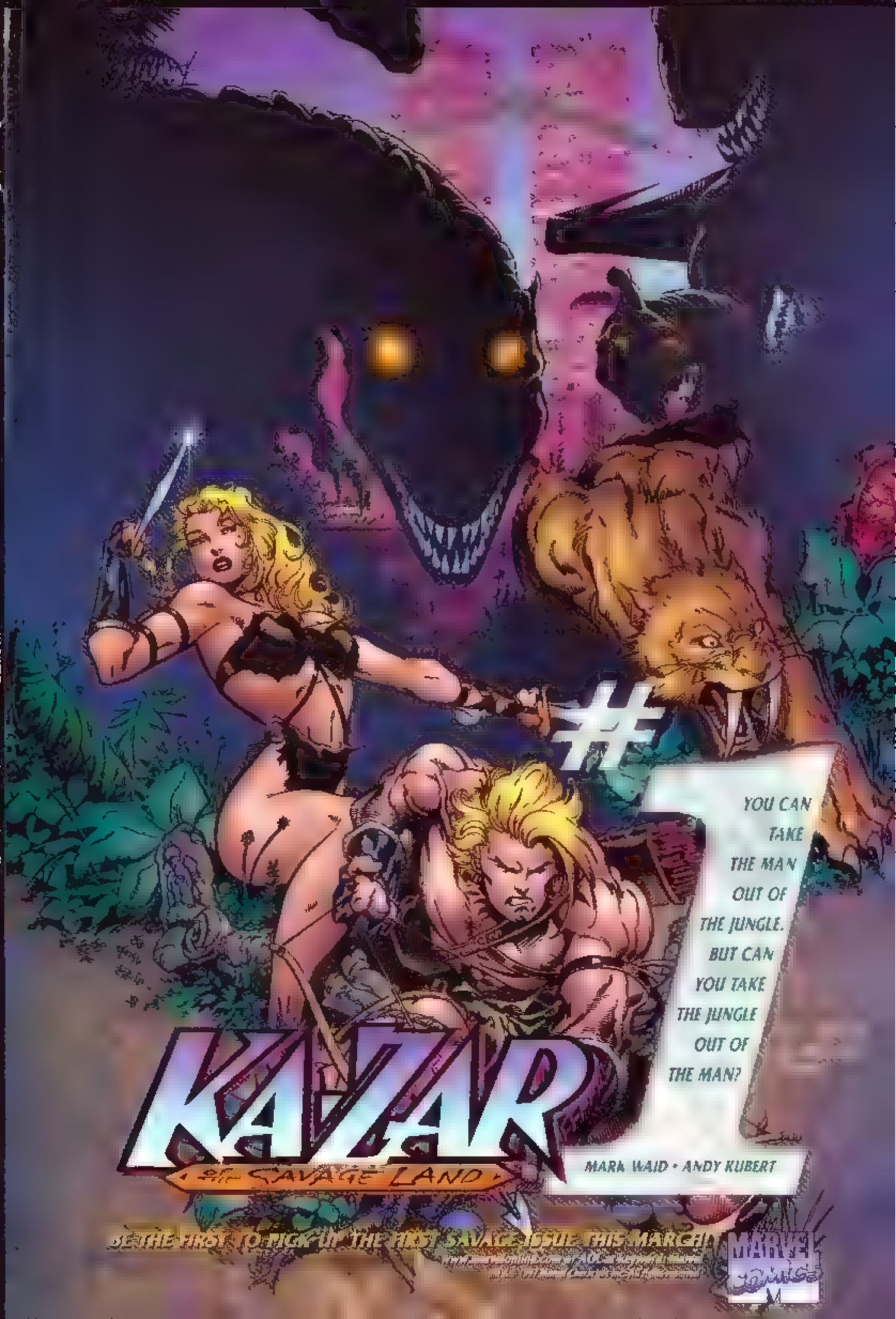
THE BOTTOM LINE: Fury and S.H.I.E.L.D. will continue to play key roles in this book and in *Avengers*, notes writer Jeph Loeb. "They hadn't intended Cap to wake up, but I've always hinted and will continue to hint that there's nothing happening in the 'Heroes Reborn' universe that wasn't somehow worked out ahead of time and planned for by Fury."

The World Party will remain the foremost threat, adds Liefeld. "We've introduced the core bad guys of Red Skull and Master Man, and I really love Baron Zemo, so he'll be getting a shot," he says. "We're tossing around ideas for more Cap villains now. Don't be surprised if you see Modok. I love Modok, and he's on the drawing board."

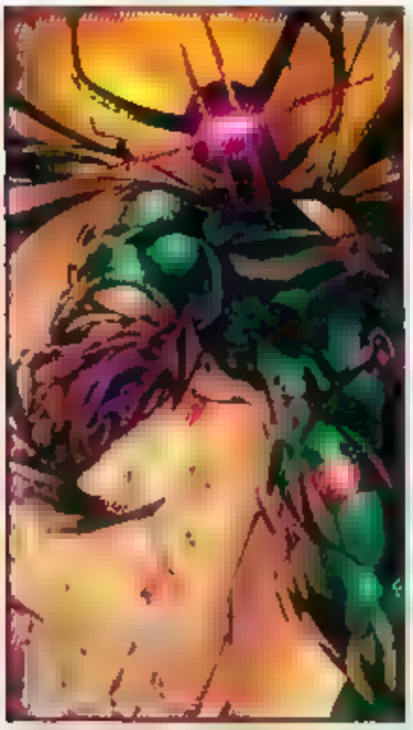
THE AVENGERS

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW: Nick Fury convinces the awakened Captain America to lead S.H.I.E.L.D.'s team of superpowered adults, the Avengers. The team rescues and signs up Thor, throwing a curve at Fury, who also must contend with other personality conflicts among members.

The team defeats Kang and Mantis, but during this conflict the android Vision shuts down,


#1
YOU CAN TAKE THE MAN OUT OF THE JUNGLE. BUT CAN YOU TAKE THE JUNGLE OUT OF THE MAN?
KA-ZAR
THE SAVAGE LAND
MARK WAID • ANDY KUBERT
BE THE FIRST TO PICK UP THE FIRST SAVAGE ISSUE THIS MARCH!
MARVEL COMICS

That tempts S.H.I.E.L.D. scientist Henry Pym to shrink himself to microscopic size and enter the Vision's body. His robotic helper Ultron seizes this chance to betray his creator, and seals Pym inside the android just as S.H.I.E.L.D. arrives to claim the body. Meanwhile, Loki tricks the Hulk into attacking Avengers Island, culminating in its destruction. The battle leads to Iron Man's joining the team, which shifts its headquarters to Manhattan.



WHAT'S GONNA HAPPEN: The team moves into Avengers Mansion in issue #7, during which they realize the Scarlet Witch is missing. According to Loeb, issues #7 and #8 will show the recreation of the Vision and the young and impressionable Wanda's role with him, as their relationship is recast. These issues will also introduce us to a new team of villains that includes the Executioner, Enchantress, Ultron and a surprise character with very strong ties to the creation of the Vision. (Longtime Avengers fans probably can figure out who the surprise is.)

Issue #9 flashes back to explain how Hellcat, Swordsman, Hawkeye, Vision and the Scarlet Witch came together and also offers revelations about the mystery of just who Hawkeye really is. Issues #10 and #11 are still under wraps, but #12 includes a major wedding...and the untimely arrival of Galactus.

THE BOTTOM LINE: "Each character has a destiny, and none of them can escape that," Loeb explains. "It's a weird kind of déjà vu. We introduced Mantis, and we know that ultimately she and the Swordsman have a date with destiny they can't avoid, and we're going to play with that." Loki also is a pivotal character. "He realizes he's in another universe—there's no Asgard, there's no Odin," Loeb says. "For the first time in his life, he thinks he has a real chance to take Thor out of the picture. He's allied himself with the Enchantress, who gives him an enormous power base, and he figures if he has to destroy all of Midgard [Earth] to get rid of Thor, it's no big deal."

THE FINAL ALL-TITLE BATTLE WITH GALACTUS could be the catalyst to fling everybody back into the Marvel Universe in one incarnation or another, or it could keep them right where they are. Do the creators see the series continuing beyond the 12 contracted issues?

"Sometimes I think the best thing would be to do 24 issues of *Fantastic Four* and really play it out right and have some fun. There are a lot of things I'd like to be able to develop more," admits Lee. "But staying longer would come at the expense of the fans that supported me in my own company, and I have to weigh that. Plus, Marvel wants to wait to see what happens with the books, and I can't put everything I'm doing on hold until they decide."

Liefeld is warily optimistic that his books, at least, will continue past their first year. He points to the huge number of boys 12 to 18 years old, a key demographic, who tell him they'd never read the characters before, but are doing so now. "It's not an issue of finances," he declares. "I'd do these books for free, just for the sheer joy of doing them. The overall fan excitement and sales indicate it should go on. I'll be very disappointed if it doesn't, but I expect it won't. I've learned to hope for the best and plan for the worst."

Either way, Lee says, Marvel's experiment has already garnered positive results. "'Heroes Reborn' shows that these characters are still very viable and can regain an audience," he notes. "It shows that the industry isn't in as bad a shape as we thought. We just need to put some energy and passion into it and do some healthy runs on books. It's given me the confidence to go back out there and really commit to a long run on my next project." And it's given Marvel a running start for whatever comes next for four classic books and dozens of existing characters who are ready to face the future, reborn or not. ▼

Craig Shutt, who wrote about the Thunderbolts last month, can't wait until the "Heroes Reborn" versions of the Thing and Human Torch get to meet the Beatles.

"HEROES REBORN" YEAR 2

"Your imagination runs away with you when you work on these characters," says Rob Liefeld. "It's hard not to think about what would happen next." So if "Heroes Reborn" was renewed, where would he and Jim Lee take the stories in issues #13-#24?

"There's so much stuff you could do with what we've set up," Lee offers. For instance, when the FF meet the space anomaly in issue #1, there are several other ships closing on it too. One of them is Russian and contains Ivan Kragoff and a bunch of monkeys, who are cosmically transformed into the Red Ghost and his Super-Apes. "There are lots of stories that can be developed out of what's in those ships."

The FF would visit Atlantis to further develop the love triangle among Reed, Sue and Namor. Reed also would interact more closely with the Iron Man book, which would delve more deeply into the activities of the "Knights of the Atomic Table."

In *Avengers*, Liefeld would develop the triangle among Agatha Harkness, the Scarlet Witch and the Enchantress. "It's a shame we won't get to develop that subplot more, because it's the one that has most of my attention." Readers would also meet the Squadron Supreme ("I have a tremendous fondness for them," Liefeld reveals), as well as learn more about the Swordsman, Hawkeye and Hellcat.

Cap would spend more time working with the Invaders as well as attempt to adjust to reality, now that his S.H.I.E.L.D. fabricated life has been torn away. He's also discover aspects of how he'd been living since the end of World War II while continuing to battle the Red Skull and the World Party. Liefeld also hoped to introduce a British version of the Avengers called The Crown, featuring five team members based on English royalty (The Duke, The Duchess, The Jester, etc.). And the creator regrets that neither he nor Lee will be able to show the pervasive nature of S.H.I.E.L.D.'s covert and overt reach.

"We're looking at the end of the tunnel and wondering how much we're going to be able to get done before we end comes," Liefeld says. "Issue #12 is going to roll around and people's expectations will only have been whetted." ■ *CS*

The Red Ghost and one of his Super-Apes

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Wizard casts the movie!

Casting Call

By a bunch of Wizard staffers

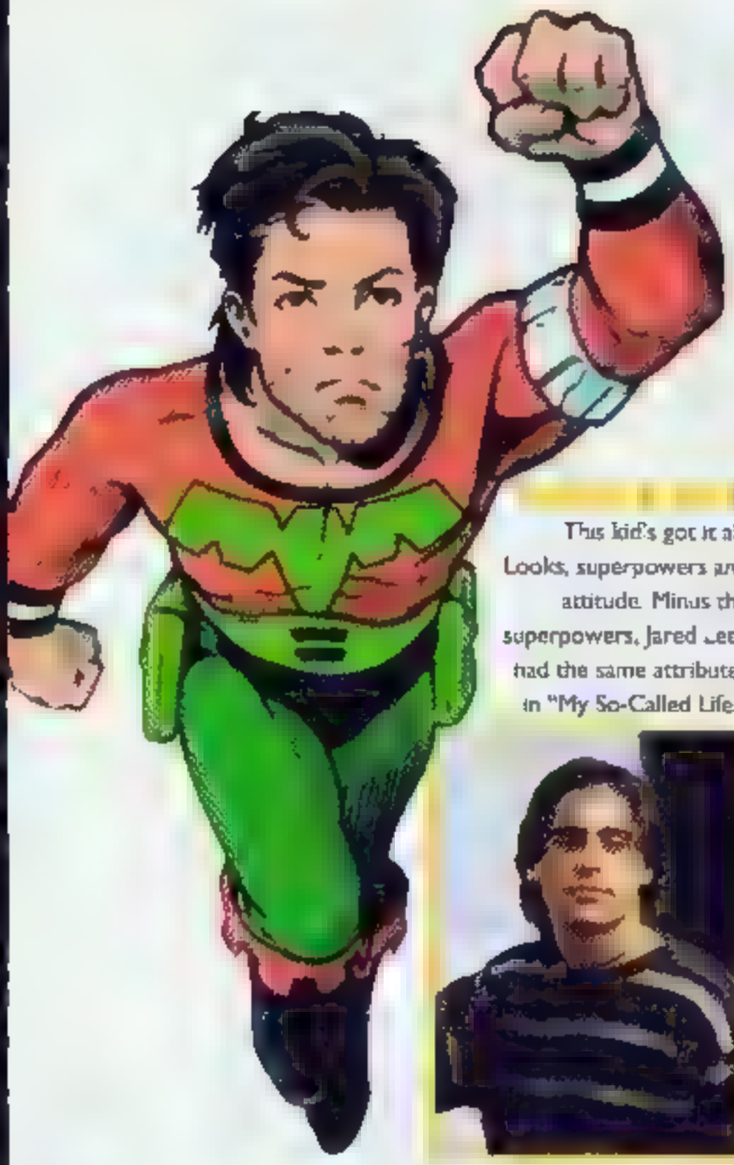
All photos by the Everett Collection.

Now here's a plot for a movie. Earth. The 30th century. A group of superteens who call themselves The Legion of Super-Heroes. Throw in a bad guy or two wrecking a few worlds, and you can't miss! Who wouldn't want to see a bunch of teens with some really cool powers travel to other worlds and kick some evil alien ass? Of course, to make a real box office draw, we'd have an all-star cast to play the parts. Who would we pick? Well, read on...

For the electrified co-founder of the Legion, we'd need someone who can be impulsive, but can also be laid back and take orders. Leonardo DiCaprio ("Romeo and Juliet") has proven his brashness on-screen, so he's our pick.

The Legion leader has to be someone with enough charisma to make others look up to him, but also have the ability to be a take-charge kind of guy in crisis situations. Jeremy London ("Mallrats") has both, that's why we chose him for the role of Cosmic Boy

Marne Patterson ("Something So Right") would make a great Saturn Girl. She exudes that level-headed inner strength that the Legion's telepath has.



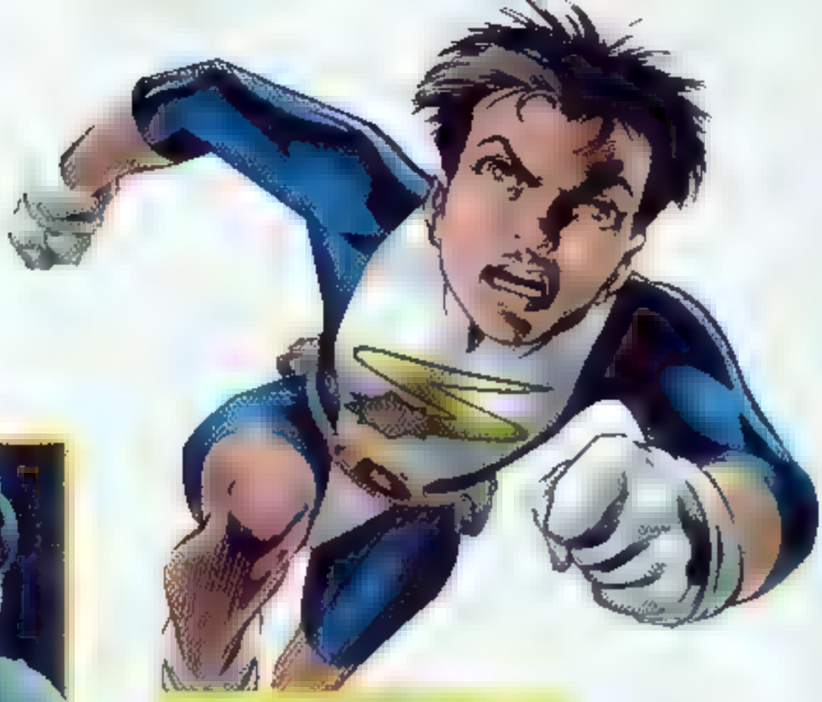
This kid's got it all. Looks, superpowers and attitude. Minus the superpowers, Jared Leto had the same attributes in "My So-Called Life."

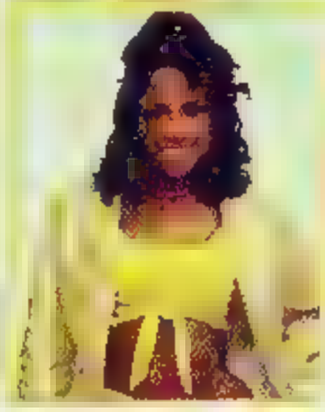
After being the resident genius on "SeaQuest DSV," we figured why not cast Jonathan Brandis in the role as the resident genius of the Legion? Paint his face green, give him a computer pad to fiddle with and bam... we got us a Brainiac 5.

The role of Andromeda, the Legion's female powerhouse, needs to be filled by someone who can pull off a look-at-me-wrong-and-I'll-kill-you attitude, but look so good you'll want to take the chance Sarah Lancaster ("Saved by the Bell: The College Years") would be super

Claire Danes ("Romeo and Juliet") has the sweet face and spunky attitude, which makes her our pick for Spark, the cute, and sometimes outspoken electrified lass in the Legion.

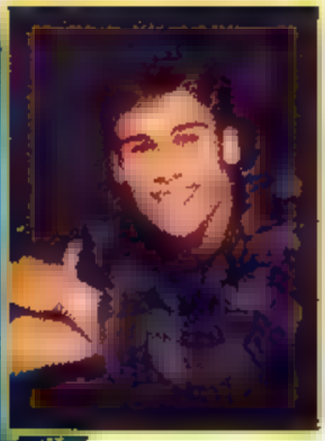
The peaceful lone survivor of Trom known as Element Lad needs someone who can be happy calm and able to see the good in everything. Brad Renfro ("Sleepers") has just the look we need





With her cute looks and a last name like Dash, we couldn't pass up the opportunity to cast Stacey Dash ("Clueless") as the Legion speedster, X-S. Plus, she's got the right dopey, good-intentioned attitude (and would look great in a skintight outfit).

M'Onel is the superguy with a sensitive side. We needed someone who could pull off being a guy who everyone likes and looks up to in times of trouble. Chris Demetral ("Dream On") is our choice.



Scott Wolf ("Party of Five") has that innocent, naive quality about him that fits Invisible Kid's character. Throw in some cool fade-in and fade-out effects and we can't lose with this pick.

Slap some orange make-up on him, give him some antenna, and Wil Wheaton ("Star Trek: The Next Generation") would make a perfect Chameleon, the Legion shape-shifter. Plus, aliens are old hat for him from being on "Star Trek" for so long.

Kathleen Robertson ("Beverly Hills 90210") would be fantastic for the role of Triad, the only member of the Legion who can split into three separate beings. She's got the perfect look and hey, to be on a show like "90210," she's gotta be able to switch personalities in a snap.

For the giant of the team, we chose Christian Oliver ("Saved by the Bell: The New Class"). Of course we'd have to use some trick shots to make him appear to grow, but he could pull off the role, no problem.

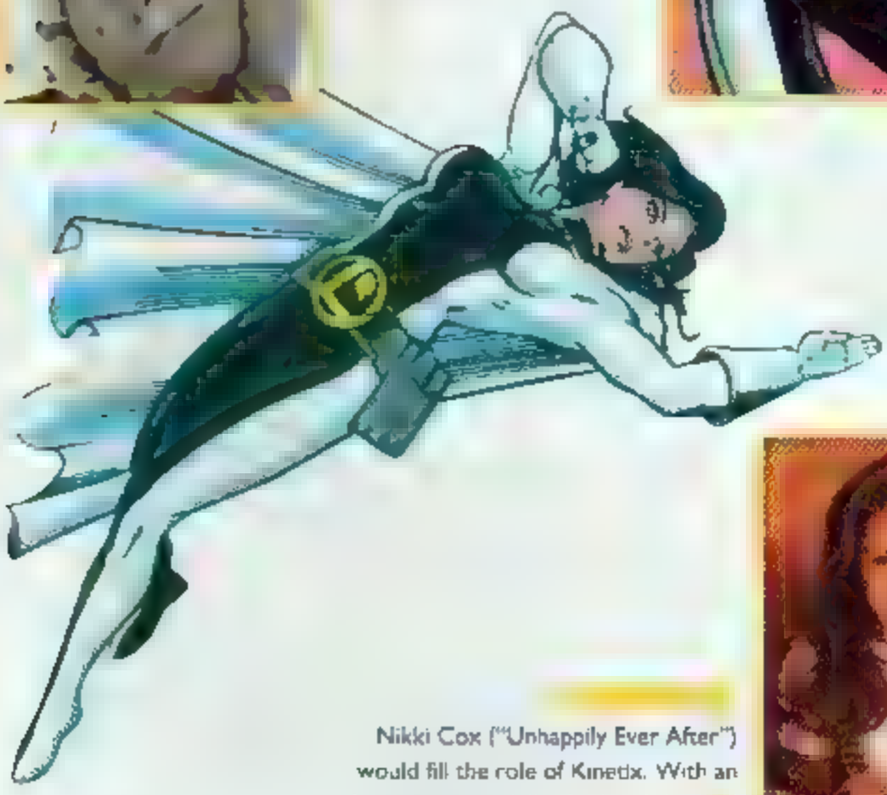
Okay, Shrinking Violet, we need someone who can play a shy and soft-spoken girl. Natalie Portman ("Mars Attacks!") can easily do that. As for her shrinking ability...we'll let the special effects people handle that.

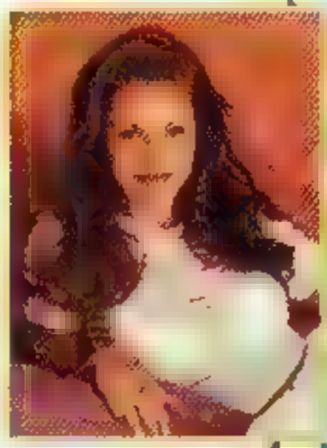
For the newbie Legionnaire with magnetic powers, we chose Douglas Emerson ("Beverly Hills 90210"). He could easily throw on the upbeat, happy-go-lucky personality this Legionnaire is known to have.

The hotheaded, hot-bodied bad girl could only be played by Jennie Garth—who can be a hotheaded, hot-bodied bad girl on "Beverly Hills 90210." Put her in a spandex outfit and you'd light up the screen.

For Apparition, the raven-haired beauty of the Legion, we want Neve Campbell ("Party of Five"). On screen, she's tough, smart and pretty—just what we're looking for.

Back when he had his floppy hairdo, David Faustino ("Married... with Children") was a perfect match for Star Boy. He's got the attitude, and all we'd have to do is give him a few months to grow his hair out.





Nikki Cox ("Unhappily Ever After") would fill the role of Kinetix. With an upbeat attitude, a killer bod and that red hair of hers, the match is right on.

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Model Citizen

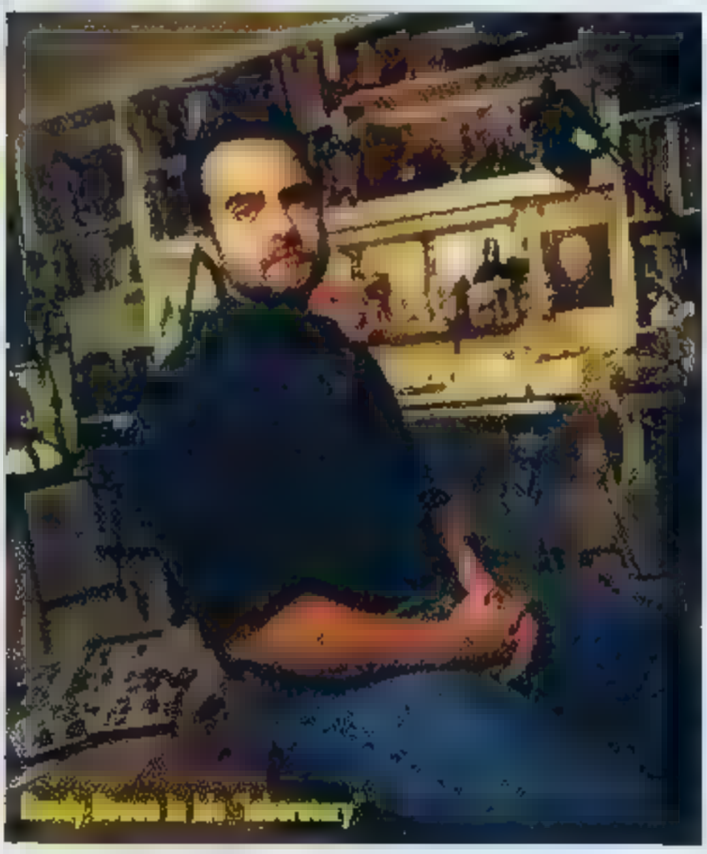
Randy Bowen's step-by-step guide to sculpting your favorite comic book heroes By Craig Shutt

He's the Dr. Frankenstein of the comics industry. Sculptor Randy Bowen somehow takes a length of coat hanger and a big glob of clay and magically turns them into three-dimensional beings so realistic you swear you saw them move. To help explain how he does it, Bowen agreed to take *Wizard* readers through each step of making a sculpture—in this case, a statue of Star Wars' Boba Fett (due for release in March from Bowen Studios/Dark Horse Comics).

He offers a key tip to would-be sculptors: "Learn how to see. That sounds philosophical, but the most important part of sculpting is knowing how to draw, so you know how things should look. Study the masters [like Michelangelo], learn anatomy and read books on sculpting."

As a child, Bowen, who currently runs Bowen Designs Inc. from his home in Milwaukie, Ore., honed his sculpting talent out of necessity. "We were too poor to buy toys," he explains. "But my father was a shoe cobbler who had all these great grinders and tools. I spent a lot of time after school in his store making things with my hands."

Becoming a pro today means you've gotta have the goods to become successful, he warns. "In the last three years, a lot more people have gotten into it. If you want to be next, one turn the page to see how it's done.

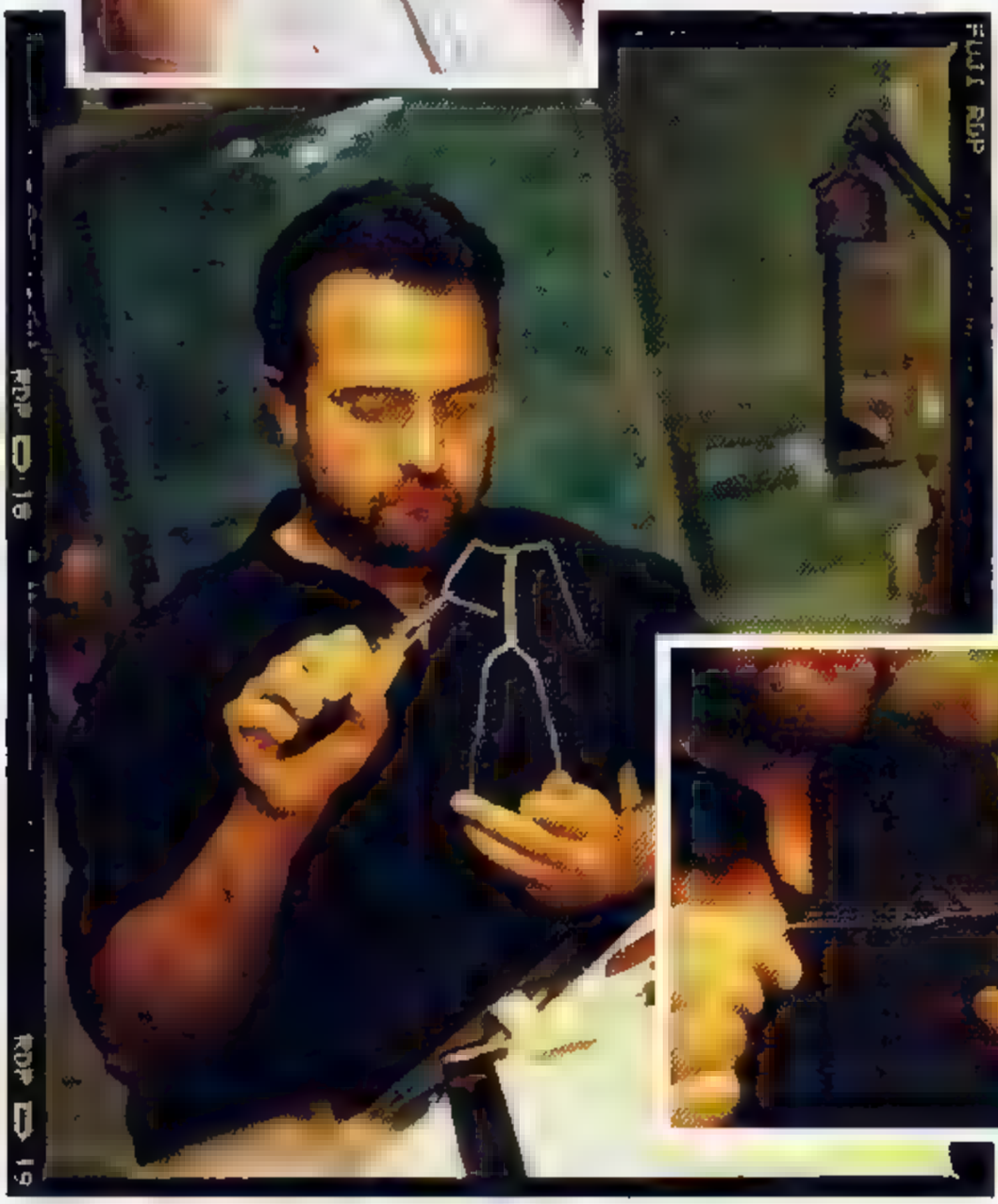


Photographs by Robbie McClaran

It all starts with a sketch (at right). "The creator tells me his idea, and I tell him if it's possible," Bowen says. "Then he sends me a sketch and we talk it over. Sometimes I send him a sketch to prime the pump and give him something to correct. My goal is to keep the creator happy and translate his style into three dimensions." The final sketches are done as a "turnaround," with front, back and three-quarter views.

Then the armature is created (left, and both pictures below). Bowen sketches the straightened-out figure to the size it will be sculpted, then lays wire over the drawing to establish how much he'll need. Today he uses aluminum armature wire, but he says regular coat hangers work, too. He bends this "skeleton" into the shape he wants. "I think I'm best known for my dynamic poses and the feeling of movement I give to my figures."

To save time, he tries not to use armatures for smaller parts, such as hands. But it's critical that the armature be strong enough to support the weight of the clay, called Super Sculpey when it hardens. If the clay will be especially thick in one portion, he'll bake a first layer onto the armature and then add onto it later. Otherwise, the outer "skin" will crack from dryness before the inner layers harden.



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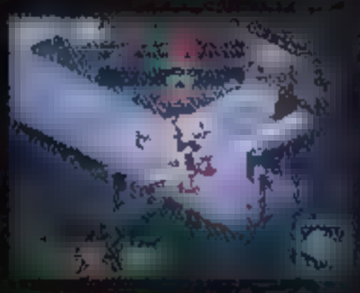

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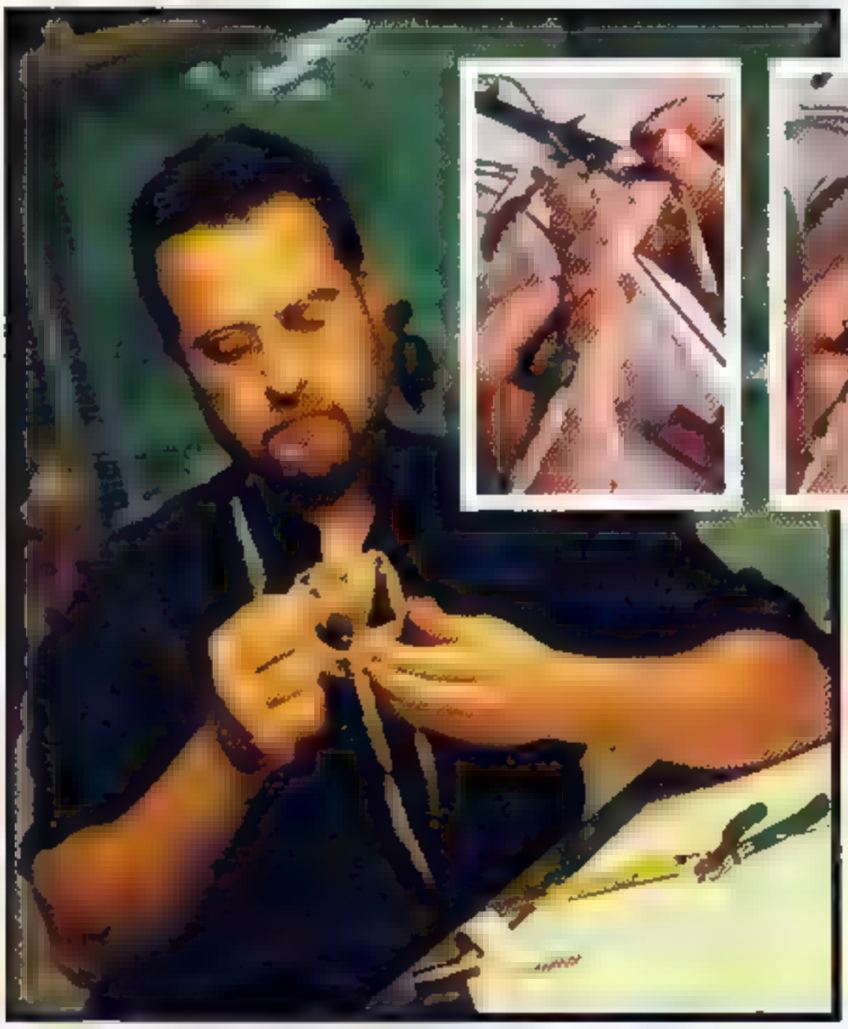
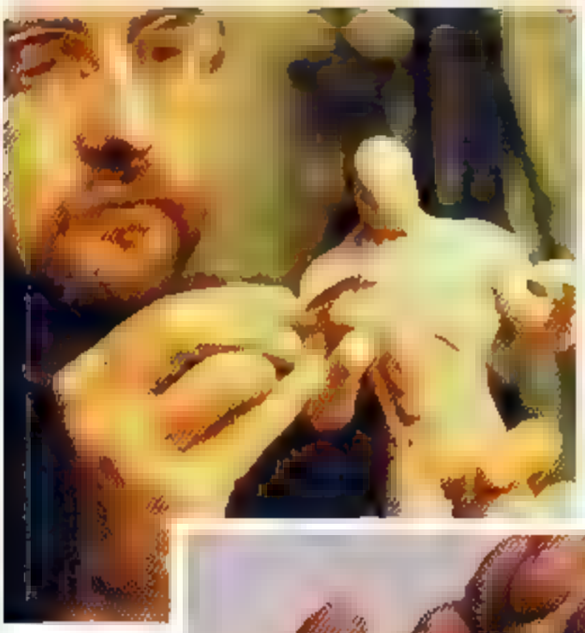


He sculpts the figure, building layers of clay onto the armature until he achieves the basic form. He sculpts figures nude and adds clothing and anatomy details, such as tendons and muscles, once he's satisfied with the basic form. Even major details, such as Boba Fett's helmet, are created separately to ensure a realistic fit.

"Art stores don't sell sculpting tools for miniatures," he laments, which led him to create his own tools. His favorite was made from a piece of hammered copper that tapers to a "spoon" shape (below right), which he uses to smooth in clothing and details. The other end has a curved, sharp point to etch lines. His arsenal also includes tools made from guitar strings and wooden dowels.



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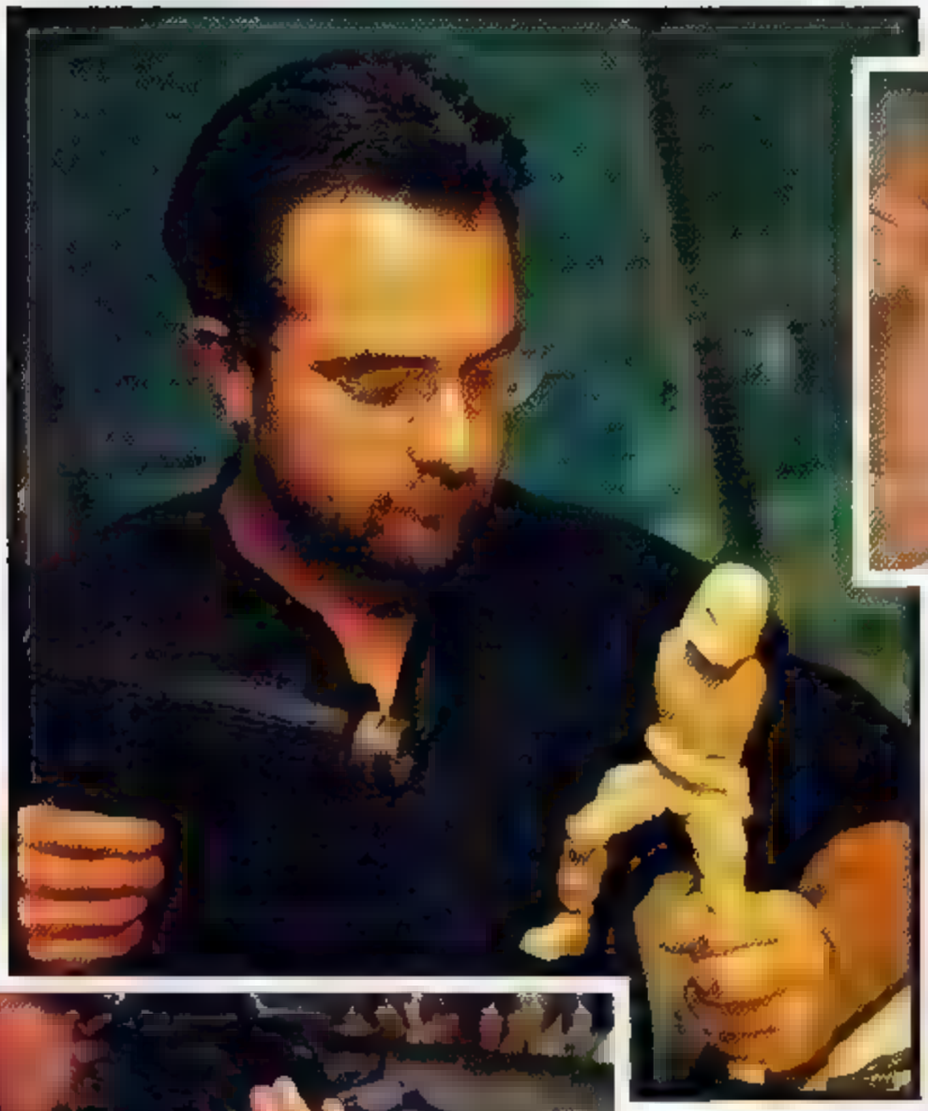
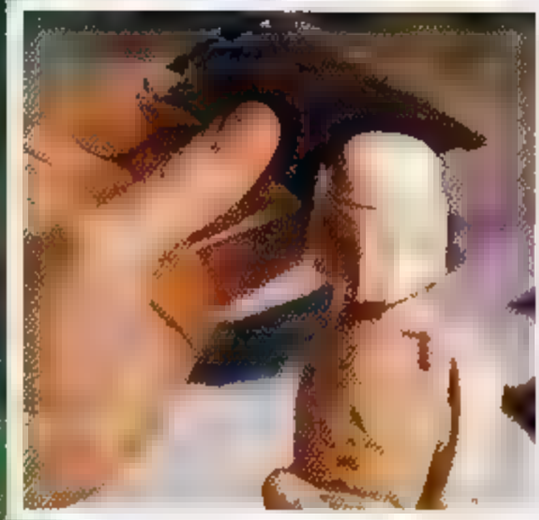
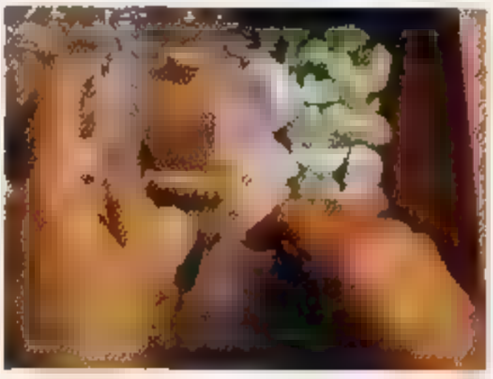




Bowen bakes the basic form in a regular kitchen oven at 250 degrees for about 30 minutes. Then he adds clothing and details, firing each addition with a heat gun, rather than rebaking the entire piece (at left). When he's finished, he sands off any rough edges (above). "Machined-looking pieces are the hardest to create," he admits. "The more geometry, the tougher it is. Symmetry is also difficult—I love it when hair is blowing, because it hides one of the ears."

He usually sends two videotapes to the creator during the process: One shows the basic form for approving stance and design, and the second includes 99 percent of the detail (at middle left). "I'm my own worst critic," he admits. "Before I do a video, I sometimes sculpt a piece twice. Usually, it takes one to two weeks to get a design I like. Rarely does it go boom! and it's set." It did once—he was so inspired by reading one of Mike Mignola's *Hellboy* stories that he sculpted the finished bust in 40 minutes.

The hardest part of the entire job is packing the finished piece so it reaches the mold makers safely; plastic bubble-wrap and styrofoam packing "peanuts" usually do the trick (below right). The mold makers cover the form with a silicone coating to create a rubber-like mold. They peel the mold off and use it to make about 10 to 20 "master" figures, which then are used to create molds for casting the retail products. Most consumer models are created from cold-cast porcelain, a polyester resin that doesn't require heat to harden. "The final version is a little skinnier than the original, so there's a tendency for noses to become sharper and heads to compact," he says. "We build in enough material [during the sculpting phase] to allow for that."



Bowen personally paints about five copies of the raw resin casting, sending three to the factory for artists to follow when applying the acrylic paints. "No two are exactly alike, but they all follow the same guide," he says. At this point, he breaches a sigh of relief at having another project finished

Except there are new creatures and heroes already in various stages of sketching, wiring, sculpting, videotaping and detailing. So Bowen heads back to work. And fans wouldn't want it any other way.

Craig Shutt, who takes you through the second half of "Heroes Reborn" in this issue, popped all of Bowen's bubble-wrap in a maniacal frenzy

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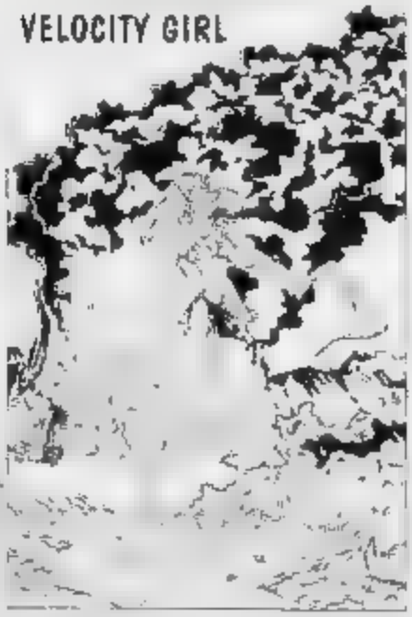

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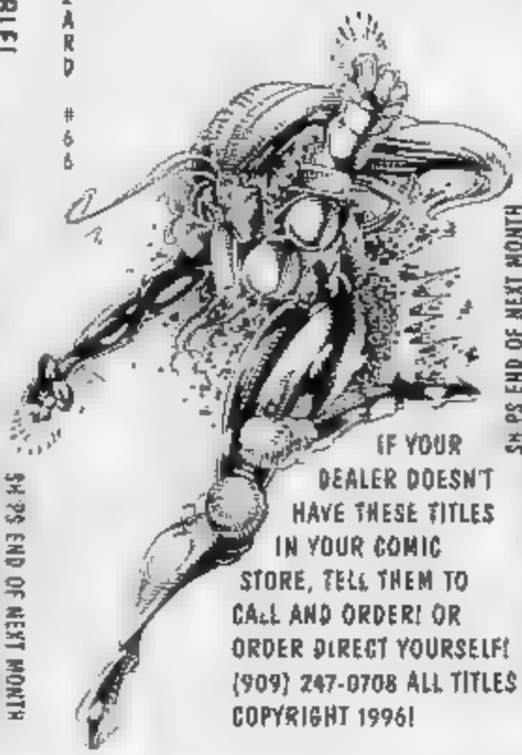

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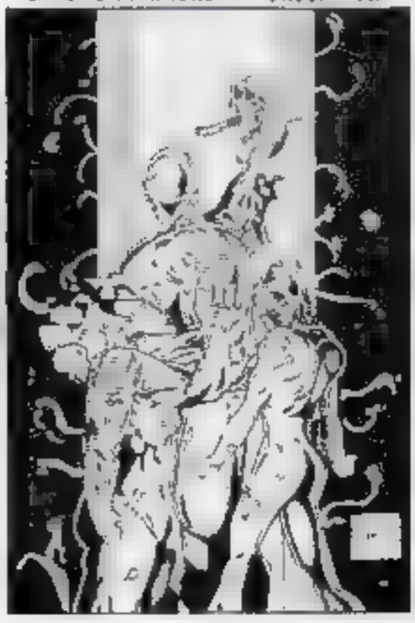

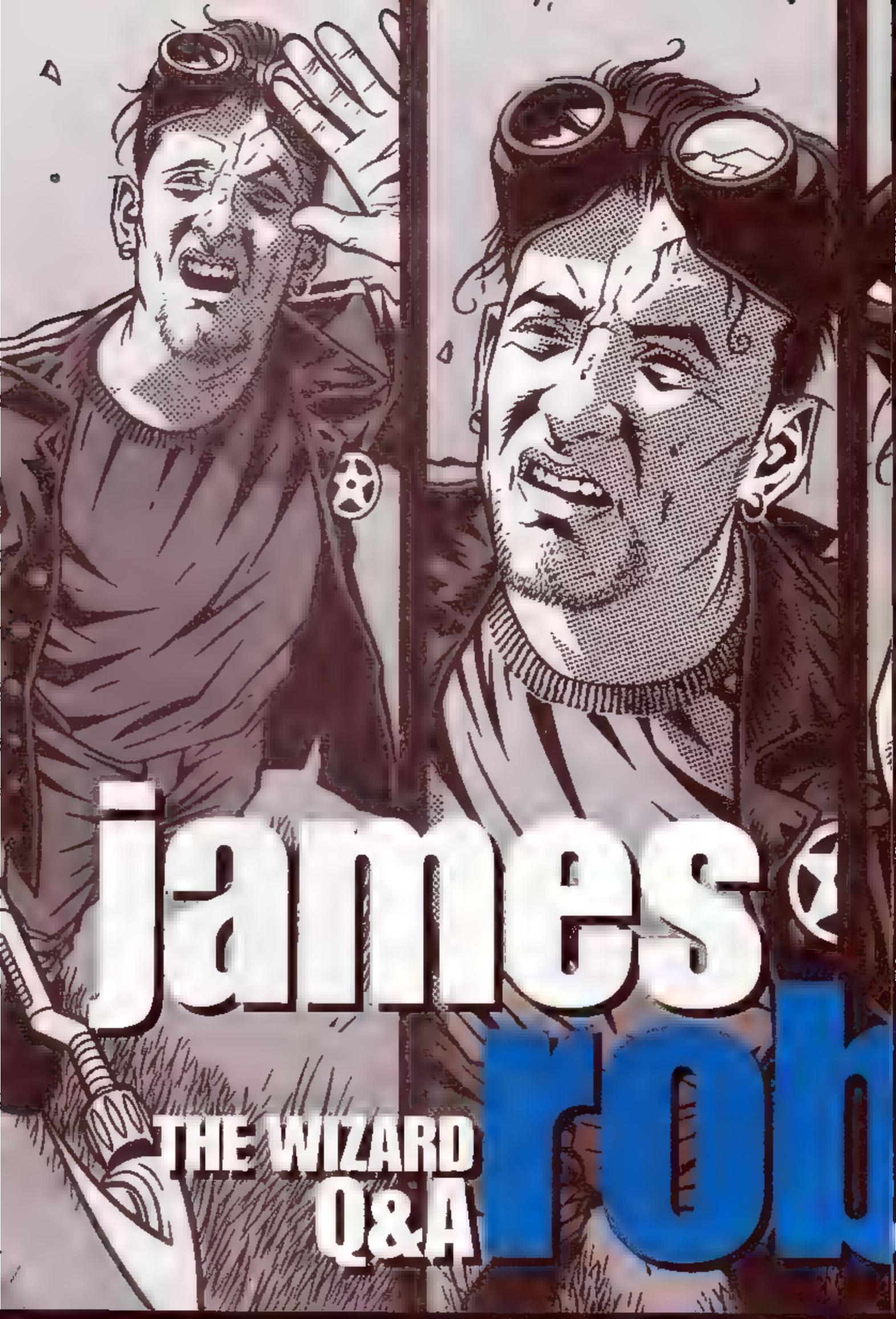
james
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THE WIZARD
Q&A

One of comics' most versatile writers, James Robinson keeps reaching for the stars

By Matthew Brady

I'M ALWAYS DOUBTING MY ABILITIES confesses writer James Robinson in his rather sophisticated sounding English accent. "I'm always—and this may sound like such a crock—doing with the idea of just quitting comics completely. I read my work and think, 'Oh God, why am I even bothering?'"

Luckily for Robinson, he's good. Damn good.

One of comics' most versatile writers, the California native is a guy who writes various *Terminator* mini-series for Dark Horse, an offbeat Vertigo mini-series like *Wildcards*, a hi-octane superhero book like Image's *Wildc@rds* and a comedy book like *The Simpsons: Treehouse of Terror*.

And he's balancing out even further with his current work. In DC Comics' cult hit *Starman*, Robinson writes of a reluctant grunge superhero who can't wield his destiny as one. And *Leave It to Chance*, his new Homage Comics title, is a book for all ages and all genders starring a young girl vying for her family heritage of becoming a sorcerer.

And with versatility comes a hectic schedule. Luckily, between meetings and plotting conferences, Robinson found some time to give us the skinny on his work and where he wants to go next.

WIZARD: What do you consider your big break in comics?

JAMES ROBINSON: After getting a degree in film-making in England, I got work as the editor at Titan Books. One thing led to another, and I decided to write a graphic novel, which was called *London's Dark*.

I think my big break, if I actually had one, was that [former Epic Comics Editor-in-Chief and current DC Group Editor] Archie Goodwin had noticed *London's Dark*. He was aware of my work, and was trying to get me something at Epic Comics [Marvel's now-defunct creator-owned line], but nothing really worked out. When Archie came to DC, I pitched and got approval for *The Golden Age* [an out-of-continuity "Elseworlds" story starring a retired Justice Society of America]. While that was being developed, I wrote "Blades," a three-issue arc for *Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight* [#32-34] with [artist] Tim Sale.

How did *Starman* come about?

It started when I was having trouble finding a monthly book. I had wanted to do something using an established DC character, and I wanted to find a character that had no positive perception, and possibly even a negative perception. Starman suited what I was looking for. I asked Archie if he

Meet Jack Knight, the grunge hero of Robinson's Starman

inson

Vital Stats

Name: James Robinson
Occupation: Comic book writer
Born: April 1, 1963 in Altingham, Cheshire, England
Base of Operations: Burbank, Calif.
Career Highlights: *Starman*, *The Golden Age*, *Leave It to Chance*, "Blades" in *Batman*, *Legends of the Dark Knight* #32-#34 and *WildC.A.T.s*.
Do you have a tattoo like Starman? "Yes. It runs from my elbow to shoulder. It's roses with a lot of greenery and has the names of the three most important women in my life in it. And it didn't hurt to get it."

could get me the Starman name because I wanted to re-interpret the character so he made more sense. As I began to look at it, I realized that the thing that was missing was a sense of a heritage that the Flash and Green Lantern have. So it was obvious to use Ted and David Knight [the first and second Starman] to begin Jack Knight's heritage, and I've worked in ways to include the alien blue Starman, and the Paul Levitz/Steve Ditko Starman, who will be meeting Jack in the future, once Jack goes into space.

As far as contemporary superheroes go, *Starman*'s Jack Knight is not your standard-fare superguy in comics. He's the son of the Golden Age Starman, his identity is well known, he runs an antique, collectibles shop, doesn't wear spandex, and he's got a bunch of keen tattoos.

I wanted to do a character who was fun, but not with the standard look, feel and attitude that you normally see. Most superhero secret identities tend to be a little on cardboard and by-the-numbers. I wanted to have an alter ego that was perhaps even more interesting than the superhero element. I hope we achieved that with Jack Knight.

Jack's personal life is well-balanced, and he seems like a normal guy. Could Jack walk away from being Starman someday?

Actually, at some point when you're doing one of these long-running series, a suitable ending comes into your mind. I had not intended to do this because I had not wanted to try to walk in the shoes of Neil Gaiman, but when it happens, there's nothing you can do except work towards that ending. Around issue #6 or #7 of *Starman*, I got the idea, and I began to sow the first seed of it in issue #7, and I'm now working towards that ending. Jack Knight will cease being Starman in January of 2000.

Will anyone pick up the mantle after Jack leaves?

I have no idea. It's so far off, I doubt anybody cares. For all I know, I could have a fit of artistic pique and quit next week. My intention is to keep it going until then, if I can. The one thing I do worry about is the cons of writing a "cult" book, which is that you're never sure if you've got a book that people care about to begin with. I'm never aware of a "buzz" around *Starman*. I know it has a following, but I'm never aware that following is so huge that the mass of comics' readers care about it. When books are nominated for awards, *Starman* seems to slip through the cracks.

I sometimes worry that as time goes by, if fan apathy gets a foothold, I'll be forced to stop the book because there will be no demand for it. I guess there are enough loyal readers to keep it going for now.

DC has declared February as "Starman Month," with Starman merchandise and a "jump-on" issue. Did you have anything to do with that, or was it all DC's decision?

It was something that DC wanted to do for a while. I'm very grateful to DC. They've always been behind my work and *Starman*, and felt that the book had found an audience, but it deserved a wider one. They decided to give this push in February and March, which I hope attracts new readers.

Possibly a mistake I made early on is that I got caught up in the whole mythos of *Starman*. While I'll be building on that mythos from now on, I intend to keep the arcs contained in themselves a little more so that readers can jump on more readily. It's one of the things you have to watch for with an extended continuity. If you're not careful, you can alienate people coming on board, because they feel that there's too much baggage that they don't understand. I'm trying to get around that in the future.

Switching gears slightly, let's move to *Leave It to Chance*. How did the book come about?

Chance was an idea that came to me one day. First, it's always bothered me that there isn't a female demographic in comics. Girls may start reading comics with something like Archie Comics, but then they get alienated by all this "boy's fiction" that's in most comics. Some of them get their navels pierced, start wearing dark eyeliner and start reading Vertigo books, but the bulk of them just stay away from comics completely.

I thought that there had to be a way that you could come up with a book that will attract girls with a strong female character. It's been tried before, but these books tend to scare boys away, or not interest boys, so I wanted to come up with a world that is universal and exciting for everybody. With that in mind, it fell together that the perfect amalgam would be Nancy Drew meets "Kolchak: The Night Stalker" and *Leave it to Chance* fell into place.

I knew it was a book that I could try and get off the ground on my own, and try to find an artist, but it would be all the stronger if the artist came on board with it's inception, and we developed this thing together. That's when I brought in Paul [Smith], and we've been partners in this venture ever since.

The fact that the book is selling out everywhere is a very pleasant reward for our efforts.

Is *Leave It to Chance* going to be monthly?

At the moment, Paul cannot do a monthly book, so what we're doing is four months on, then a month off, then four more months, averaging eight issues a year, and we're going to do it in sequential numbering.

What I want to do with Chance is much like Batman, where all you need to know is his parents were killed, he grew up to hate criminals, he became Batman and that's really it. Once you know that, you can enjoy any Batman adventure. With Chance, she wants to be the next Falconer [a family responsibility to be the world's most renowned sorcerer], her father doesn't let her, so she gets into her own mysteries, and that's all you need to know. Obviously, there will be a mythos where we're building on the greater sum of the various issues of the past, but no storyline will be more than two issues, so it's a book that readers can pick up and enjoy for itself. I want to try and keep *Chance* very accessible and immediate for readers, so they can always pick up an issue and read it.

Hopefully, we're giving the book a texture, and a sense of personality that appeals to readers of all ages.

What are your intentions with Chance? Where is she headed? Is she ever going to gain approval from her father?

No, she never will gain her father's blessing. That's something that's always going to be just out of sight. She's going to explore various mysteries, and she's going to develop a circle of friends her own age, as well as older characters. There is also an arch-enemy who will slowly become apparent as these single stories take place, and he's just in the background. He will reveal himself in issue #11 or #12, and from then on, he'll be a recurring character. There's also a pirate ghost named Captain Hitch who'll be a recurring character as well. And of course, there will be a whole rogues gallery of monsters and supernatural characters that we'll be building on issue-by-issue.

What about your *Golden Age* sequel, *The Silver Age*? Is that still on the slate?

It's still on the books, but Howard [Chaykin, the projected series artist] has some commitments at the moment, and I am loathe to begin writing it until I know Howard is freed up, because I can't think of anybody else that could do the job as well as Howard. Unless Howard says he doesn't want to do it—and I'd find someone else to draw it, which would be a compromise on my part—I really don't want to start it until he can begin working on it, so it's in a state of hiatus until people's schedules clear up slightly.

How will it be connected to *The Golden Age*?

The Silver Age will be a series involving the birth of the new Silver Age characters. It will be my interpretation of the events, and unfortunately, it ends up as an "Elseworlds" [a DC term for an out-of-continuity story], because I choose to set it in the era that these characters actually first appeared [in the late 1950s and early '60s]. It will be an adventure that will bring them together and will be the epitome of that era in terms of the kinds of villains that they will be facing. It will make mention of the events in *The Golden Age*. They will be plot elements, but they won't be the main element of *The Silver Age*. The central characters will be King Faraday, John Jonnz [the Martian Manhunter], the Barry Allen Flash, the Hal Jordan Green Lantern, the Challengers of the Unknown, the Doom Patrol and other early Silver Age characters.

With all your projects, do you have a tough time balancing your workload to keep the quality of your individual projects high?

Yes, pretty much. I hate to sound like a complete prima donna, but with almost everything I do, it's quality first. For example, I was actually the first writer approached to do *Kingdom Come* with Alex Ross, but I decided not to do it. As much as I wanted to work with Alex, I just felt that I wasn't the right writer for the project, and couldn't do the project justice. It ended up, I think the right writer was Mark Waid, who did a great job. I always try and preserve that quality, which is why I quit *WildC.A.T.s* as well—so I wouldn't over-commit myself and compromise my work. I'm always worried about the quality suffering.

Speaking of *WildC.A.T.s*, how did you get on that book?

I originally came on to *WildC.A.T.s* to do the two issues [#15 and #16] focusing on Ben Santini and the Black Razors. They're the ones that I feel happiest about, and I wish at times that I had left after those first two. But I had so much fun doing those issues that I decided to stay on, and I think ultimately getting Alan Moore [to write it after me] was the best thing that could've happened to the book.

At left: Chance Falconer (with her dragon St. George) wishes to be the next family sorcerer in Leave It to Chance.
At right: Robinson quit WildC.A.T.s because he felt his work suffered in quality.

Moving to one of you're latest high-profile projects how did you get hooked up with painter Joe Jusko for *Vampirella: Bloodlust*?

I was asked to do the story in the *Vampirella 25th Anniversary Special*, which I did as a homage to Archie Goodwin, who really was the defining creator on that character. After that, Harris Comics editor David Bogart asked me if there was anything else I wanted to do with the character. I couldn't think of anything, but then the opportunity to work with Joe came up, and it was a challenge that I felt I had to take. Joe hadn't done any sequential artwork, except one story for *Epic Illustrated*, which had never been printed, so it was my chance to work with him on his first sequential work.

We didn't have to strive for an idea [EDITOR'S NOTE: The story focuses on what happened to Vampirella while she was "dead," when she was really transported to her home planet of Drakulon], so with that also being a factor, it just made for a very easy write on my part. I don't even remember writing that book. It came very quickly, and everybody was very happy with it. It's a work we're quite proud of.

You'll be picking up the writing chores on Event Comics' *Ash* as well pretty soon. Again, aren't you worried about overloading?

I've told [*Ash* co-creator] Joe Quesada that I'll commit to four issues at a time. If I find that the work is getting too heavy, I can close things on a bright note, not end abruptly. I'm doing the first four-parter which will involve more of Ashley Quinn's personal history in terms of his father and his family, and in terms of the firemen he works with, and how it ties in with the Actor [Ash's major foe].

Tentatively, plans are that the second arc will be a magic-based story that will bring Lucas Falconer, Chance's father [from *Leave It to Chance*], to New York, where he'll meet Ash. Possibly, Chance will tag along as well.

In your work, you seem to be attracted to rather obscure eccentric characters. Are there any more out there that you'd like to work with?

I've just been asked if I'd be interested in doing a three-issue Superman story. I've never done Superman, and I said I'd try to come up with an idea. Whether I can come up with an idea remains to be seen, because I will certainly try to, and because I'd like to do that.

The other character that I have a huge affection for is Daredevil, but I feel such a reverence for that character that I'd be loathe to ever try and write him. Between the work of Gene Colan and the work of Frank Miller, the book's been written.

I have fun with the Golden Age characters that I dig into in *Starman*. And the character that I enjoy going back to time and again is Batman. I enjoy writing him, and luckily with Archie Goodwin being the Legends of the Dark Knight editor, I've had that chance more than a few times.

Do you ever see yourself doing a run on a mainline superhero book, either at Marvel or DC?

With Marvel, I don't know. At one point, when Marvel was doing any book about any character, they asked me if I wanted to do a *Doc Samson* project. This was back when I was looking for a monthly book, and a lot of the feel of *Starman* actually was what I had originally worked into *Doc Samson*. I wanted to turn the Ringmaster into an amoral character like the Shade is in *Starman*. It's funny how a lot of that transposed over into *Starman*. But that fell through for one reason or another.

In terms of a regular book, I could do a Batman book in a moment, because that's a character I feel very comfortable with. Other books, I don't know. It would depend on whether I had a vision for that character, and who presented me with what idea, really.

Where do you see yourself in five years?

I would like to be involved in film. But I will always write comic books. I think comics are a much maligned medium. One of the saddest things I ever saw—and I know this isn't Neil's sentiment—was in *Entertainment Weekly*, [which] listed Neil Gaiman as "Winner of the Week," because he had been a comic book writer and he had gotten a book deal. The way it was written was to imply that he was slaving away in this filthy, plebeian medium of comics, and now he had ascended to the more valid and accepted medium of prose. I guess in some ways, that's how the public sees it, but I'll always feel that comics are a valid medium, with their own set of values, and with inherent strengths that you cannot duplicate in films or books. So, I would like to be involved in films in five years' time, but I'll always be involved in comics. Right now, I'm content to take things one step at a time. W

Matthew Brady, who chronicled Daredevil's history in this issue, is toying with the idea of quitting eating Slim Jims completely.

MR. ROBINSON'S NEIGHBORHOOD

As you can probably guess, James Robinson is the every editor's "most wanted" list. Here's a bit of what's coming up on his plate:

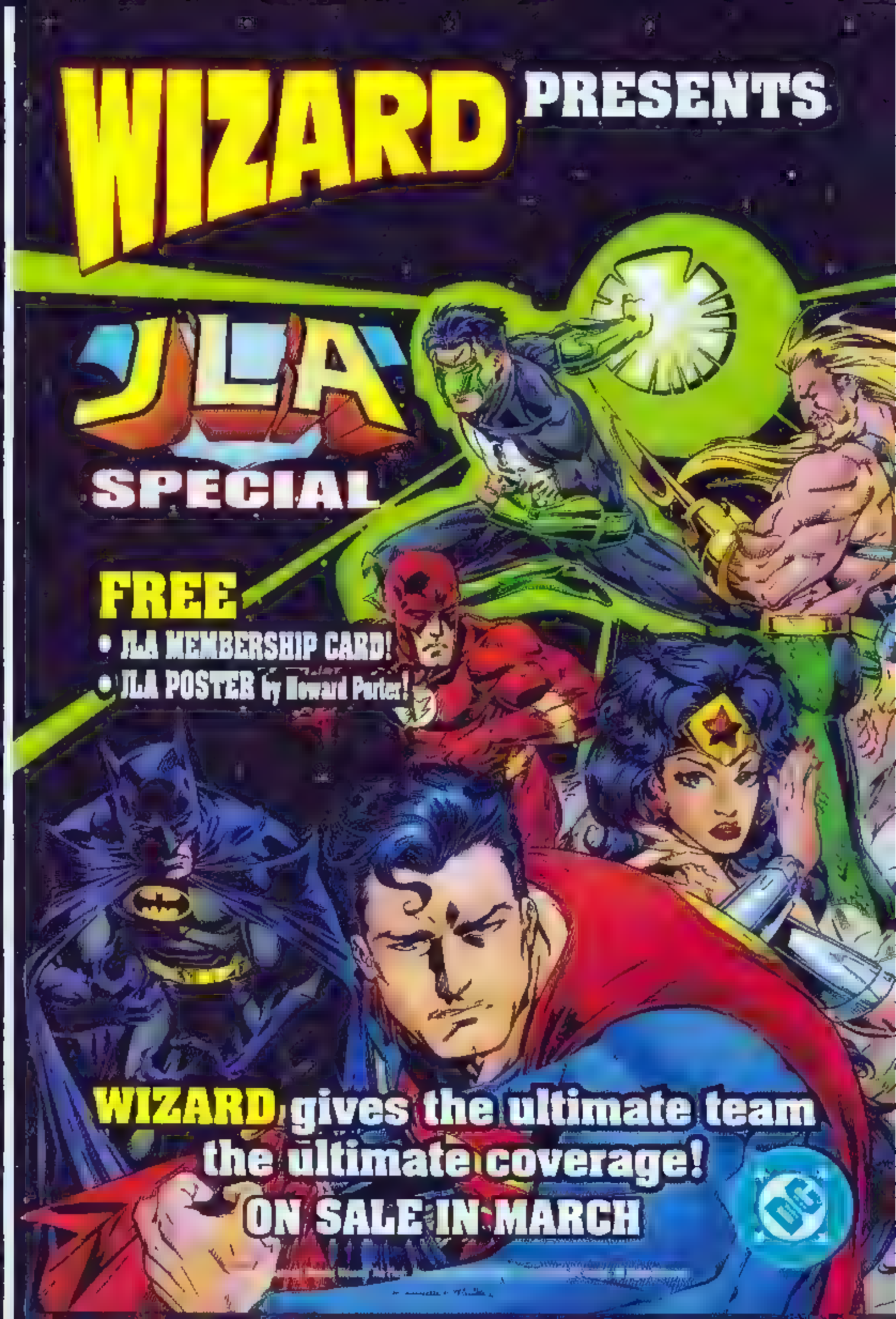
[illegible] Kicking off in February, the four-issue mini-series will have each issue set during a different time period, starting with #1 in 1830s London. The series will chronicle The Shade's confrontations with members of the Cadiche family, a family that [illegible] from one city [illegible] to another [illegible] after he gained his powers. Look for cameos by Jay Garrick, Golden Age Flash, Gwen Kit and The Spider. Art duties change each issue with contributions by Gene Ha, [illegible], Fred Blevins and Michael [illegible].

[illegible] Batman goes to Opal City, Tank Town, to solve a mystery involving the heritage of World War I flying ace and former Wonder Woman of the Month, Jonathan Robinson, with an added sister, Badboo Burter. The cover of the book is drawn by Steve Yarwell with an 18-page flashback of Robinson Burter during WW I drawn by Russ Heath.

[illegible] "It hasn't been approved yet, but I feel it's imminent," Robinson says. "It would be a two-part special, so that would be a lot of fun."

[illegible] While The Shade's origin wasn't be explored in the mini-series, she's pleased on the subject of a feature Shade special. Robinson is planning to do with artist Michael [illegible].

[illegible] "Something that Mark Waid and I are trying to get off the ground at DC," Robinson says. "The series would be a reinterpretation of the first days of the Justice Society. It would be in continuity, but it would be not quite Vertigo-like, but a slightly more sophisticated rendering of the characters who comprised the initial membership of the original Justice Society." W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ON SALE IN MARCH
DC

Basic Training

this month's host: Brian Douglas Ahern

How to Draw in a Cartoony Style

Your uninhibited instructor, Prof. Ahern

When I was attending art college, I got a royal chewing-out from one of my professors, who found superhero drawings in my class sketchbook. "There's no market for this stuff," he hollered. Later, when I stopped by his office, I peered through his window to see if he was in, but couldn't see him. It's not that he was with another student—I couldn't see through his window, which was covered with cartoons. Cut from magazines, newspapers and books, they all had some connection to fine art.

No, my professor wasn't a hypocrite. You see, cartoons have a far-reaching and universal appeal. There's literally a cartoon for everyone. Car lovers, baseball players and scientists all have their own favorite cartoons. A cartoon can be anything! Whatever a given cartoonist loves, that becomes his cartoon subject.

And after the next four pages, we'll see if cartoony superheroes may be your subject too.

Interior Design

To get an idea of how a humorous cartoon approach differs from mainstream superheroes, we need a hero for comparison. And who better than Wally West, a.k.a. the Flash?

We can see that Flash conforms to heroic proportions. He has imposing stature, enhanced muscle structure and a heroic stance. A cartoony approach tends to be a trifle less imposing.

AN ACTION HERO HAS EMPHASIS ON OVERALL MUSCLE STRUCTURE.

A HUMOR CHARACTER EMPHASIZES THE HANDS AND FACE, FOR MORE COMEDIC EXPRESSIONS.

Our ideal hero is made for action—he's drawn to indicate a body of muscle, bone and sinew. His cartoon counterpart, on the other hand, is made for slapstick and visual silliness. His body looks more flexible, as if it's composed of foam rubber and elastic.

We can identify these differences by noting the linework which composes each hero. The real Flash's sketch is more tight, defined and hard-edged. He also requires more interior work to establish his defined musculature. But the cartoony counterpart's sketch is more loose and general. He's made up of wider curves and more sloping lines. Let's look at the components that give our cartoon hero his look.

Flash™ & © DC Comics

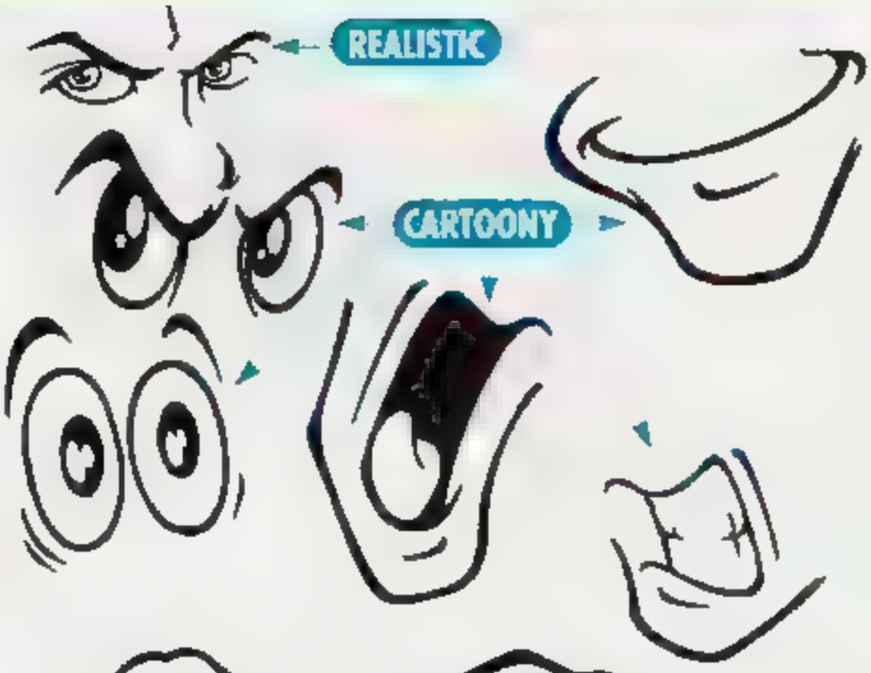
Best Foot Foward

Even when standing still, the body of our cartoon Flash (let's call him "Flashy") maintains a fluid look. Like the melting candle shown here, the easy, curving lines of Flashy's boot provide the appearance of a relaxed, pliable form.

Keep that image of the melting candle in mind! Remind yourself that soft, oozing wax makes up Flashy's interior body. Like animated cartoon characters who fall off cliffs only to have their bodies compact and recoil like play dough, Flashy remains soft and pliable. Keep your drawing arm loose, and your linework flowing. A fluid, sweeping line makes for the best cartoon.

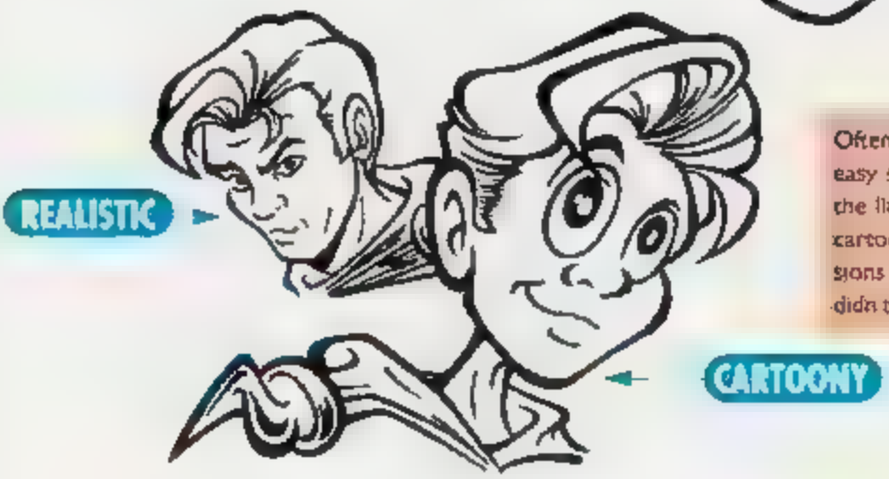
Give Him a Hand

Flashy's arms and hands also adhere to this rule, and his spongy digits tend to resemble little sausages more than fingers. This comes from the broad, swooping linework mentioned in the previous step. A light pull of your pencil back and forth (without lifting it from the paper) can create those spongy fingers. And don't fret over details like knuckles! Think general, loose and flowing. Flashy's knuckles only appear when his fingers bend. Until then, they're invisible. Same goes for any muscles on his arm—we only get an indication of musculature when he bends his arm. His elbow acts as a "catch" for that flowing wax inside him and blobs upward to form a compact, bulbous muscle.



Express Yourself

Flashy's eyes, mouth and hair follow suit to complete our character's mercurial appearance. Since the number of possible expressions is infinite, only a few are shown here. To contrast them, I've added two realistic approaches: one of just the eyes, and the other down below of Wally West's entire head. See how the short, precise lines of the realistic examples are replaced by the longer, swooping lines of the cartoon. The features shown here stretch well beyond normal proportions.



Often all it takes for a cartoony look is drawing the lines in easy sweeps and diminishing the details. Understand that the lines don't "just get longer," but softer and fewer. A cartoony hero requires a larger amount of facial expressions and poses—not linework! It's that simple. Notice I didn't say "easy." It's hard to master, but it is simple.

Turn Him Loose!

Flashy's entire body now reacts in keeping with our established reality. His appearance alone indicates we're in for some laughs! Once we combine his limbs and features to form a whole character, we can manipulate him to bend, stretch or bounce as need be with each action. Any pose can show off Flashy's "cartooniness." The goal is to have Flashy not so much react to situations as overreact. In the first three poses here, we can imagine Flashy horrified that his soufflé fell, then confronting his girlfriend Linda for hogging the TV remote, and trying to remember if it's first socks, then shoes. The wilder the situation, the wilder and more exaggerated his response.

Even in a scene where there's no obvious joke or gag, Flashy's movements are ridiculous and overblown. Wally West wouldn't be caught dead swinging his arms like this (see left) while speeding by, but Flashy has no problems. You can inject cartoon humor into any otherwise dull moment where there's no villain or threat to (over)react to. If the Pied Piper is rambling on about a new invention, put Flashy in the background fiddling with the device by vibrating his head through it to look inside, or pushing a button to discover it dispenses tater tots. Above, Abra Kadabra is trying desperately to pull a deadly trick out of his hat. Flashy's bored expression and tapping foot convey humor even though he's just standing there.

Whoa, Nellie!

There is a point when you need to lose or halt the elasticity of your cartoon character. Here are two examples of overdone Flashys. At left, we see Flashy's fist in closeup as he throws a super-speed punch. But the lines on his hand have been given too much "swoop," making the fist appear too soft. No villain would fear getting smacked by a big cream-puff fist! In the other picture, we see that Flashy's extremities (even his earpieces) have gotten too big and bulky. What could've looked smooth and fluid, now just looks cumbersome. In both these examples, it's a case of losing sight of your objective. We want Flashy to have a pliable cartoon body, not one that's silly just for the sake of being silly. What's worse, sudden stretches of Flashy's body in moments of surprise or anger will lose impact if he looks that way all the time. Make sure you maintain some levels of solidity to keep Flashy alive and believable!

Put it in Perspective

Remember: A fun, cartoony style lets us stretch Flashy a bit out of proportion, but not stretch the rules of perspective. Continue to follow all the rules of the time-honored artist, but apply them as they pertain to your bouncy cartoon hero.

Let's look at these two examples below. At left, we've got a worm's-eye view of Flashy. He's still his pliable, waxen self, even though we've taken care to follow rules of proportion and perspective, with his form diminishing in size from bottom to top. At right, our cartoony Central City buildings all conform to proper perspective. But note how the detailing is simple and generalized. That way, when Flashy races up the side of the building in pursuit of a villain, he doesn't seem out of place as he would against a tightly rendered skyscraper.

Crowd 'em In

You can only get so many laughs out of Flashy running around alone. He needs a supporting cast to interact with. Many cartoons use the main character to establish the scale by which all the other characters are drawn. Whether muscle-bound or pudgy, lanky, shapely or any, you construct each character in *direct relation* to your standard. Think of an ideal superhero drawing standard, which is usually eight heads tall. That scale is used to create not only the main character, but everyone around him. If the hero is eight heads tall, and his girlfriend is shorter, we may draw her at seven heads, and so on. I wanted Piper (below, far left) to be more lanky than Flashy, so I drew him half a head taller. Linda (below, second from right) is the same height as Flashy, but with a more feminine build, and Impulse (below, far right) is a full head shorter, due to his young age. Decide what you want to convey with each cast member and contrast that against your lead player.

And there you have it. A quick overview to begin your cartooning adventures. Cartooning often gets a bad rap because its fun and lighthearted look makes it appear "easy." But as with all aspects of comic book art, it takes a great deal of time and effort to master cartooning. It also involves an enormous amount of fun. If you're not having *fun* while drawing, you're doing something wrong! W

Brian Douglas Ahern writes and draws the spiffy superhero calendar every month in Wizard, *and yes, he really does dress like he did in that photo.*

JUNK DRAWER

Little bits of everything in the world of comic-related merchandise

By David Borak and the *Wizard* Staff

Starman Henley Shirt

STAR MANIA

Huzzah! February is Starman month at DC Comics. Look for the 100% cotton T-shirt featuring four-color artwork by Starman artist Tony Harris depicting Opal City's underdog hero shooting out from the center of an art deco circle. It's available in large and extra-large for $15.95.

Then there's the Starman Henley Shirt, a collarless, three-button, 3/4 length sleeve shirt. Based on Jack Knight's own distinctive wardrobe, this black 100% cotton shirt features a three-color Starman logo on the right-hand corner of the shirt's front, and the familiar three-color Zodiac symbol on the back. The Henley shirt is available in large and extra-large sizes for $34.95.

And finally, stylize your jacket with a Starman badge for only $8.95. This two-inch metal badge is shaped from copper with a black nickel finish and sports a silver-tone star with black enamel enhancements. A must-have for every Starman fan.

And if you're too damn cheap to buy any of these products, just check out the nifty *Wizard* Starman contest elsewhere in this issue, where you can win these and other cool Starman products.

MARVEL'S WATCHING YOU

There's a disruption in the Marvel Universe timeline again. Another "Days of Future Past"? The return of "Age of Apocalypse"? Nope. It's Marvel's new line of watches featuring all your favorite characters in three different styles. First, look for the EL Sports watches (that's Electro-Luminescent) which allow the watch-faces to glow as bright as Ghost Rider's head at night. These watches sport a Velcro band and an acid-etched case-back that provides a detailed history of the featured Marvel superhero. Choose from Silver Surfer, Wolverine, Captain America, Ghost Rider and Spider-Man.

Also, keep an eye out for Marvel's Movie Watches. With these babies, you can watch a film strip of the superhero of your choice when you turn the top and bottom crowns of the timepiece. The watches come with an anodized matte black case, a Velcro or leather web strap and a brief history of the character on the back. The first movie watches include Spider-Man, X-Men or a mixture of different Marvel heroes.

Finally, there's the antique-finished Marvel Pocket Watches. Each watch has an action character dial, a leather fob with belt attachment and that groovy Electro-Luminescent technology. For the true Marvel fan, pocket watches for Silver Surfer, Spider-Man, Wolverine and The Thing are all available.

All of these watches come with a three-year warranty and feature Japan Quartz movement. Look for them in fine stores everywhere for $39.99 each.

LI'L DEATH

DC Comics continues to cut things down to size with the new Death miniature statue due in stores this March. Morpheus' favorite (and cutest.) sister can now be found in half the size. It's the same Death statue you've seen before, only smaller. Death is sculpted by Randy Bowen, based on a design by artist Chris Bachalo (*Death: The High Cost of Living*, *Death: The Time of Your*

Marvel Pocket Watches

Marvel Movie Watches

Marvel El Sports Watches

Product of the Month

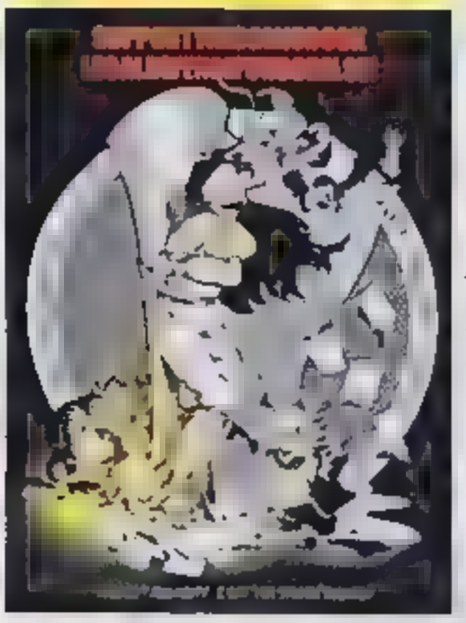
Death Mini-Statue

Life). Li'l Death goes for $59.95 and should look just fine next to the recently released li'l Sandman statue, also from Bower

BURNING ISSUES

As part of its ongoing battle against censorship, the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund has released a T-shirt featuring characters created by Terry Moore, Neil Gaiman and Todd McFarlane, with all proceeds helping to protect the First Amendment rights of all comic book professionals in the United States Available in black cotton, the T shirt (L, XL and XXL) showcases Moore's *Strangers in Paradise* heroine Francine being burned at the stake (or in this case, the U.S. Constitution) by a gang of "Smuts" (the CBLDF mascots donated by Neil Gaiman and Todd McFarlane from the *Angela* mini-series) Terry Moore himself contributed the shirt's design, which can be found at local comic shops or by sending $20.00, plus $3.00 shipping to the CBLDF P.O. Box 693 Northampton, MA 0 061 Or for credit card orders, call -800-992-2533, fax (4 3) 582-9046, e-mail 02437 430@compuserv.com or visit the company's website at http www.insv.com cbldf And don't forget to specify your size

Comic Book Legal Defense Fund T-Shirt



QUITE A HANDFUL

For those of you who enjoy angry shouts from women, WildStorm has the T-shirt for you. Featuring the popular "GEN-et Jackson" variant cover from *Gen*[13] #1 on the reverse side and "GenThirteen" in a *Rolling Stone*-ish logo on the front, this T-shirt is bound to attract attention For those of you who haven't seen this particular cover, it's got a topless Fairchild with someone holding her bazoongas, mimicking the recent *Rolling Stone* cover that portrayed a sultrily posed Janet Jackson This T-shirt comes in large and extra-large sizes for $18.95. Also, look for the much-tamer Gen[13] logo cap for just $20.95 Both items are currently on sale in comic shops everywhere

CLASSY COMIC ART

Tired of that old Monet or Picasso cluttering up your wall space? Then make room for [illegible] Fine Arts new limited-edition Iris prints, which look spiffy enough to be found in a [illegible] gallery. First, there's an all-new, all-original exclusive Captain America print by Travis

Gen[13] T-Shirt and Cap

Silver Surfer Print

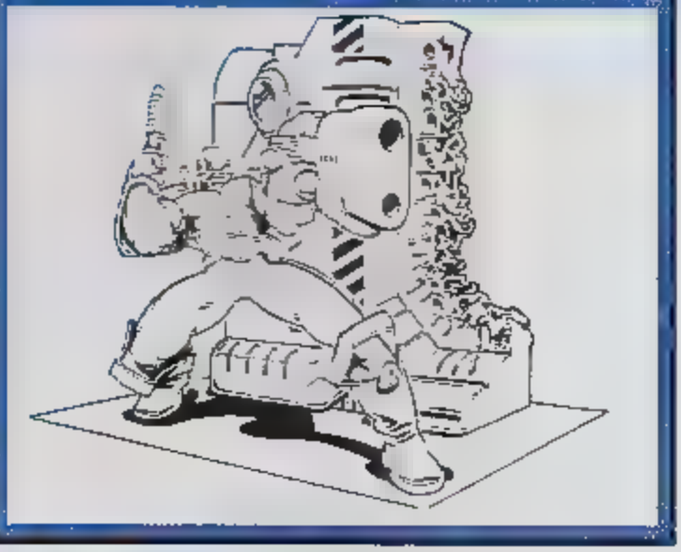
Charest (*WildCATs*). Second, you can find a high-quality lithograph of the classic cover to *Silver Surfer* by John Buscema. Each of these prints comes signed and numbered, and limited to only 300 units each. The artwork itself is 15" by 20" in area—including a large white border—and is printed on Arches watercolor paper. Both of these gorgeous prints can be ordered through your local comic store for $150 apiece.

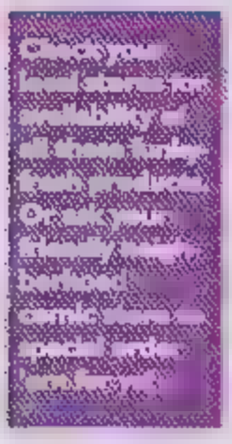
MAGNETIC BABES

Looking for something other than cayenne pepper to spice up your kitchen? Why not try Graphitti Designs' Penthouse Comix Magnet Set? For the consenting adult, it's available in most comics stores for $6.95. With artwork by Adam Hughes, the set contains three magnets featuring adult-themed renderings of your favorite females from the pages of *Penthouse Comix*.

Sneak Peek!

CREATIVE LICENSE'S NEW HORROR STATUE





HEY! Are you a company putting out some slammin' and jammin' comic-related merchandise like Malebolgia Breath-Mints, Witchblade Mittens or Savage Dragon Fin-So-Soft Cream (for supple scales too!)? If so, we'd love to include 'em in our groovy "Junk Drawer" column. (Of course, we'd also like posters, novels, T-shirts, sculptures, magnets, etc.) Please send all info and sample products to:

Junk Drawer
151 Wells Ave.
Congers, NY 10920

JUNK DRAWER video games

By Steve Brown

WIZARD EXPLORES THE PLAY IN PLAYSTATION

If Sony's 32-bit PlayStation has any hope of emerging as the number one game system, it lays in the company's amazing output of titles. The sheer *quantity* of new releases is staggering, considering the amount of program time required. Gamers, however, care about quality as well. And as you'll discover this month, Sony is definitely meeting the self-imposed high standards of today's fabulous games. Where just a year ago most games were uninspired, today it seems that every other new game is a genre triumph. We can only hope Sony can keep up this incredible pace. The following are some of the latest exciting releases that help make the PlayStation a gamer's favorite:

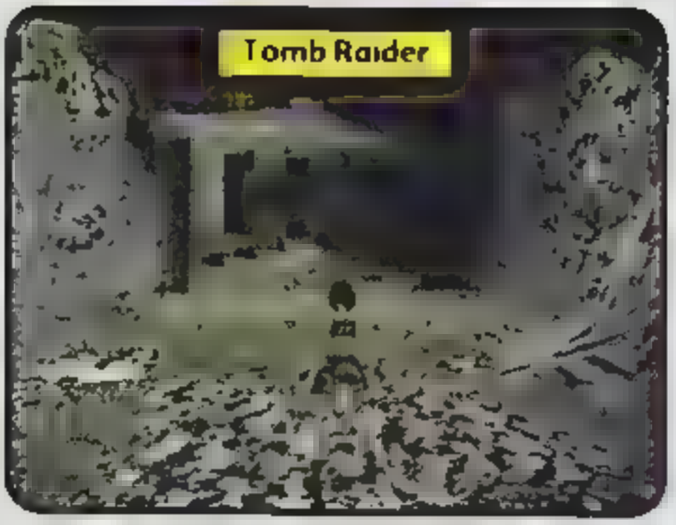
TITLE: *Blood Omen: Legacy of Kain*
MANUFACTURER: Crystal Dynamics
SUGGESTED RETAIL: $49.99, available now

Legacy of Kain is an arcade-style role-playing game (RPG), where the player must travel through the vast, unfriendly world of Nosgoth. The hook that distinguishes *Legacy of Kain* from the countless other RPG games out there is the fact that the player is a vampire with the ability to shapeshift, cast spells and suck all his vanquished foes dry. Despite this interesting premise, *Legacy of Kain* isn't deep enough to satisfy hardcore RPGers, nor jam-packed enough with constant action to satiate the advanced gamer. However, we found that it fit right into our skill levels and enjoyed it immensely. *Legacy of Kain* is very dark and bloody, and the interface is basic enough to keep your quest moving along briskly. Overall, the low learning curve and suitably evil graphics won us over in this very cool game.

TITLE: *Twisted Metal 2*
MANUFACTURER: Sony
SUGGESTED RETAIL: $59.99, available now

Twisted Metal 2 is the ultimate two-player game and possibly the last word in 3-D car combat. Only available for the PlayStation, Sony's sequel surpasses the original in every aspect. *Twisted Metal 2* features eight new tracks, 12 new cars, more wicked gameplay and a host of new weapons including ricochet bombs, remote controlled detonating bombs, napalm bursts and multiple missile attacks. There

Blood Omen: Legacy of Kain


Tomb Raider

are no preset tracks, so players can feel free to explore and interact with elements in the 3-D environments. Basically, a death match on wheels, you pick one of 10 heavily armed cars and hunt your opponent down.

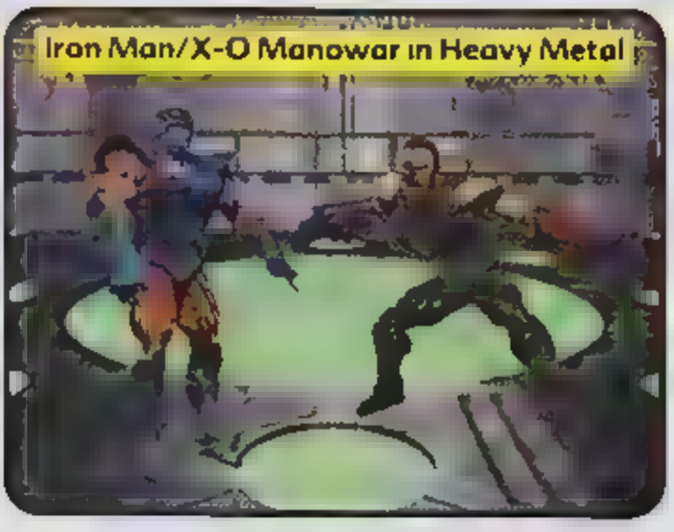
(NOTE: We found the one-player version to be quite hard, so if you're a solo gamer this may not rate as high.)

TITLE: *Tomb Raider*
MANUFACTURER: EIDOS Interactive
SUGGESTED RETAIL: $59.99
available now

Artistically, *Tomb Raider* may be the greatest PlayStation game to date. It may be too cerebral for some, though, since a great deal of time is spent exploring huge rooms *after* you've cleared all the nasties out. *Tomb Raider's* storyline follows the adventures of a gun-toting archaeologist superbabe. It seems our hero, Lara Croft, has discovered an unexplored tomb filled with killer grizzlies, frothing wolves and multitudes of other ferocious beasties. In addition, the mysterious tomb contains many puzzles and traps standing in her way. As deep as any adventure game ever programmed, *Tomb Raider's* polygonal graphics are truly an industry revelation. *Wizard's* highest recommendation goes to this one.

TITLE: [illegible] *Heavy Metal*
MANUFACTURER: [illegible] Entertainment
SUGGESTED RETAIL: $[illegible]9.99
[illegible]

Often delayed and starring an outdated version of Valiant's once-popular hero X-O Manowar, *Heavy Metal* was predestined for mediocrity. Surprisingly though, this game rises above its troubled past and hackneyed premise. Acclaim is known for its side-scrolling movie/comic book video game adaptations, and *Heavy Metal* is another entry in that long-standing tradition of "beat up the drones to get to the end boss" games. The strength of *Heavy Metal* is the smooth control and attention to detail of the comic book worlds of X-O and Iron Man. If you read *X-O Manowar* (pre-Valiant Relaunch), you'll have a much better grip of what's going on than anyone who has to decipher the vague rule book. It seems that Mistress Crescendo (a Valiant Universe bitch-villainess) has joined forces with Marvel's Baron Zemo. Utilizing an inter-dimensional gate, the villains attempt to recreate the Cosmic Cube (a reality-altering object that was shattered across the two realities). Only our intrepid armored heroes stand in their way, thus the two-player co-op mode is what *really* propels this adventure into an enjoyable diversion. A good, solid adventure game for most and a great game for Iron Man fans. We really enjoyed the first boss, Mr. Hyde, but found the Melter (Isn't he dead?) to be annoying due to the amount of unavoidable damage he caused.


Iron Man/X-O Manowar in Heavy Metal

TITLE: *Incredible Hulk*
MANUFACTURER: EIDOS Interactive
SUGGESTED RETAIL: $59.99
available now

Loosely following the comic book exploits of the Hulk while he was involved with the secret peace-keeping society the Pantheon, this game really misses the mark. *Incredible Hulk's* premise involves Hulk's capture by the Pantheon and his attempt at escape from the group's mountain fortress. Utilizing a three-quarter perspective that attempts to create a 3-D look, *Incredible Hulk* instead comes off clumsy and primitive. This game would've been passable a year ago, but in today's next generation of video games, it pales in comparison. Unlike the Iron Man of *Heavy Metal*, the Hulk has no real personality. If side-scrolling games are your bag or if you're a *huge* Hulk fan, rent it and decide for yourself.

TITLE: *Marvel Super Heroes*
MANUFACTURER: Capcom
SUGGESTED RETAIL: $65.95
available in March

This one- or two-player fighting game is *finally* being released!

Marvel Super Heroes

Based on the way-too-cool-for-words arcade game, Capcom's *Marvel Super Heroes* promises a perfect translation for the PlayStation. *Marvel Super Heroes* features 10 of the mightiest characters in the Marvel Universe: Spider-Man, Iron Man, the Hulk, Psylocke, Captain America and Wolverine make up the heroes, while the villains include Magneto, Shuma-Gorath (What the?!), Juggernaut and Blackheart. Players get to battle through rounds of competition facing off against Dr. Doom and Thanos, with the winner controlling the Infinity Gauntlet. Lots of special moves and individual power-ups are here along with all the other standard fighting game features. We haven't played a finished version yet, but the pics we've seen have us all giddy as a schoolgirl. Definitely one to look for in 1997!

THE FORCE IS WITH YOU

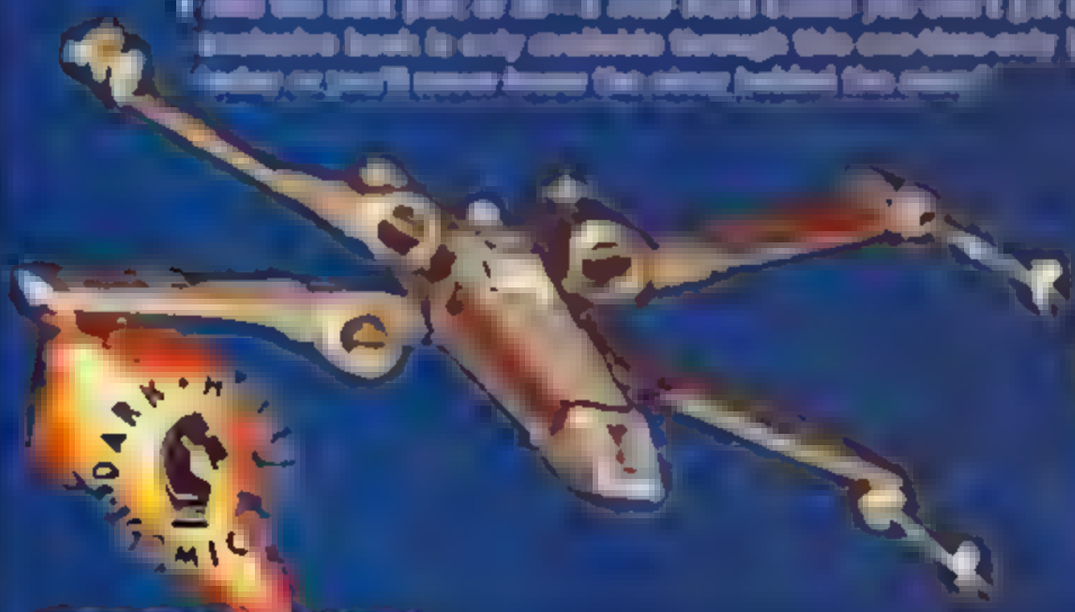
But only if you can stay ahead of the Empire and order *Star Wars: X-Wing: Rogue Squadron #1/2*. It's an untold tale of the Star Wars mythos featuring Jek Porkins, Wedge Antilles and a new hotshot X-wing pilot that you might be familiar with.

WIZARD #1/2 OFFER

STAR WARS #1/2

Order today and not only will you be spared the wrath of Darth Vader, but you'll also get one of these silly-cool Wizard [illegible] #1/2 [illegible]! This isn't an ordinary deal, it's what you get:

- A [illegible] shiny gilding you as the [illegible] weapon it has [illegible] for the [illegible] creative team of [illegible] Michael Fleisher and Mike W. Barr and artist Gary Fields!
- The [illegible] Wizard [illegible] Star Wars [illegible] glory!
- [illegible] spec drawings!
- And the [illegible] of all—a [illegible] the [illegible] book is only available through this [illegible] offer! Act fast or you'll never know the story behind the story!



Even Rebels hidden under the frozen wastes of Hoth are ordering Wedge's Gamble today to get your copy of *Star Wars: X-Wing Rogue Squadron #1/2!*

EDICT FROM THE EMPIRE:

[illegible] not be forwarded unless Wizard Press is notified in writing by April 15, 1997

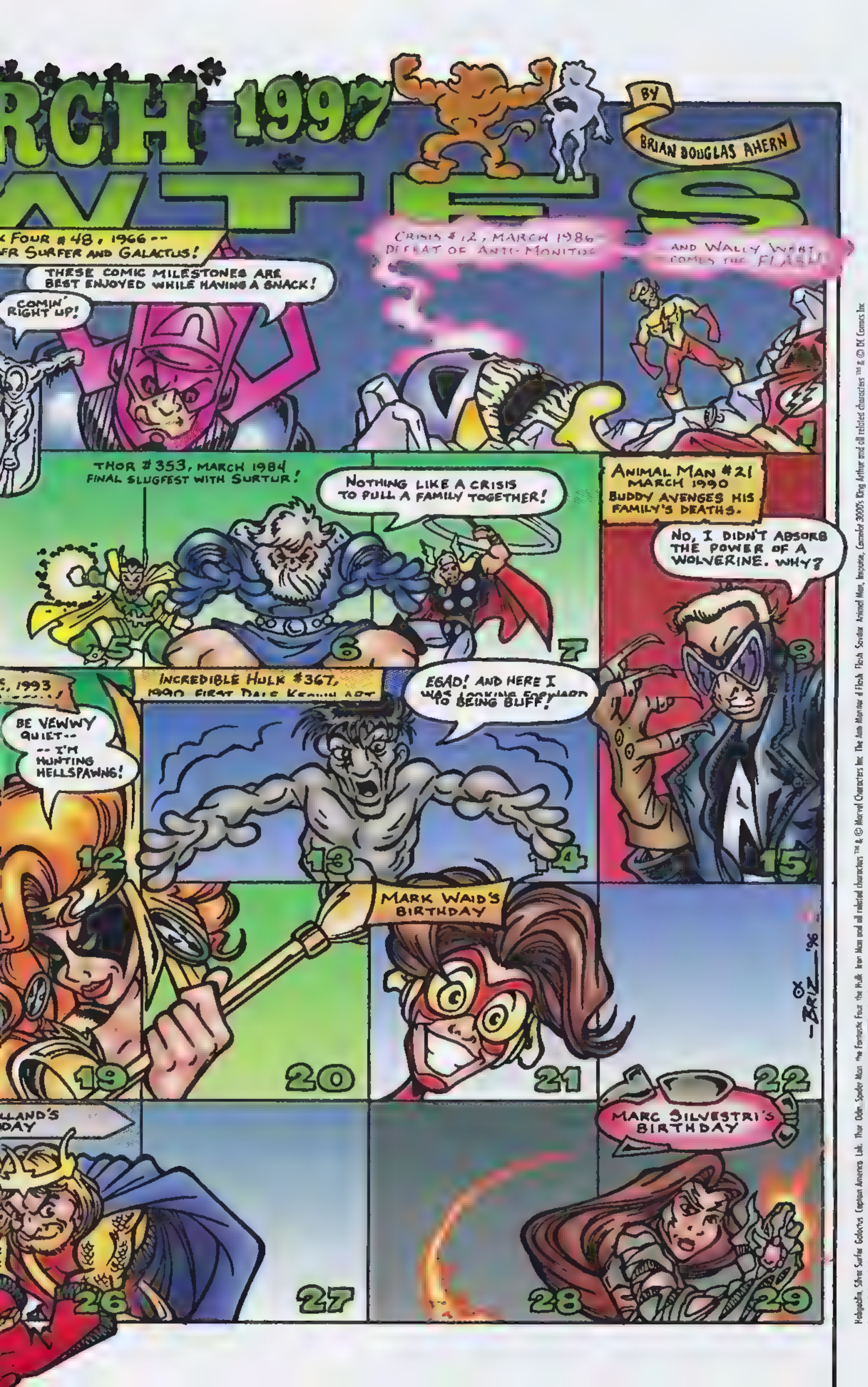
THIS OFFER EXPIRES APRIL 15, 1997

PRESENTED BY WIZARD

STAR WARS

DARK HORSE COMICS

WIZARD
IN LIKE A LION
OUT LIKE A LAMB
CALENDAR
MAR
AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #238 MARCH 1982 - THE FIRST APPEARANCE OF HOBGOBLIN!
NED LEEDS?! HAHAHAHAHAHH! YOU FOOLS!
FANTASTI FIRST SIL
FLASH #111, MARCH 1996, THE JOB OF DESIGNATED DRIVER GETS DANGEROUS--
--AS WALLY LEADS SANITAR INTO THE SPEED FORCE!
CAPTAIN AMERICA #1 MARCH 1940
AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #1
HEY, I THOUGHT NO GUEST STARS TIL THE SECOND ISSUE!
SPAWN #
TODD MCFARLANE'S BIRTHDAY
SAINT PATRICK'S DAY
AVENGERS #4, 1963 A LIVING LEGEND JOINS THE WORLD'S MIGHTIEST HEROES.
CAP, WE ONLY HAVE ICE FOR YOU!
BRIAN B
BIRTH
PALM SUNDAY
TALES OF SUSPENSE #39, MARCH 1963 THE FIRST IRON MAN!!
COMIC ARCHIVIST - DAVE ELYEA

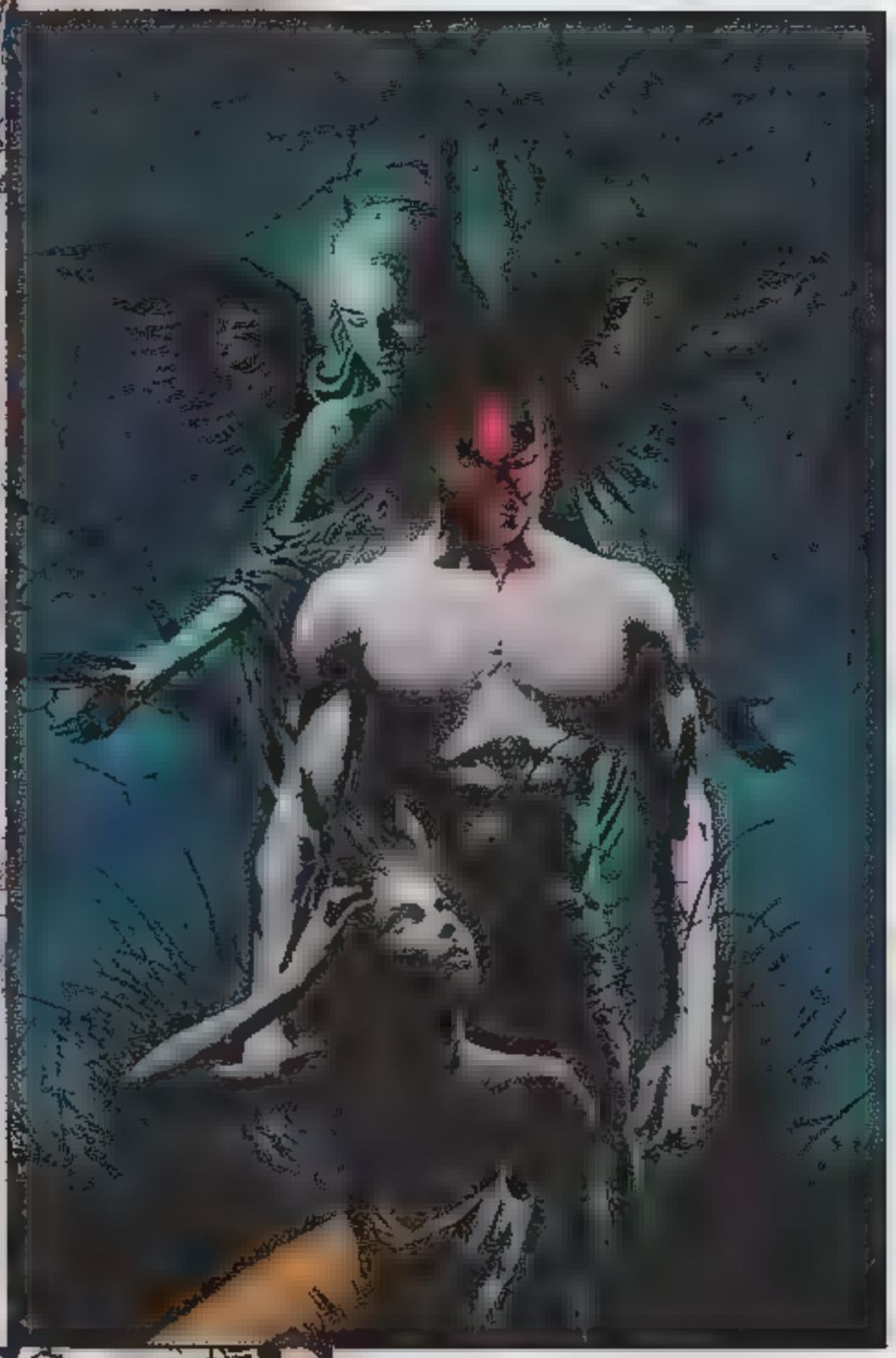


Hulkpedia, Silver Surfer Galactus (Captain America Lab), Thor Odin, Spider Man "the Fantastic Four the Hulk Iron Man and all related characters" TM & © Marvel Characters Inc. The Ants Monster of Flash Flash Sovereign Animal Man, Impulse, Gamelor 3000's King Arthur and all related characters TM & © DC Comics Inc
Spawn Todd McFarlane and Angela TM & © Todd McFarlane Productions. Witchblade TM & © Top Cow Productions. PRINTED IN CANADA

The "Mess It Up" Contest

contest!

Hellshock is back on track with a new ongoing series from Image comics. So to celebrate, creator Jae Lee cleaned out his basement! And lookit what he found—a wad of original art!



Wanna Win It?

Sure you do. Well, the cover of the new *Hellshock #1* is pictured here. All you gotta do to get a shot at the loot is deface it. That's right. Cut it out and deface it. Go on and make it ugly, make it pretty, whatever. We don't care, just mess it up. (If you don't want to rip up your mag, you can make a photocopy. We're not fussy.) The most creative defacements will win! And what goodies you could win!

Grand Prize (1):

One lucky winner will get a whole box o' Jae Lee artwork, pictured over there on the left-hand page! It includes cool illustrations, sketches, published pages, drawings and even pages that never saw print! Over 100 comic art *originals* from Jae Lee!

Second Prize (1):

One winner will get an original Hellshock sketch signed by Jae Lee.

Third Prize (10):

Ten winners will each get the complete set of the original *Hellshock* mini-series (all four issues) autographed by Jae Lee and a Hellshock T-shirt.

This month's contest is sponsored by Jae Lee and Image Comics, and we think they're darned generous.

Fill this sucker out, put it an envelope and send to: "Mess It Up" Contest, c/o Wizard Press, P.O. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118.

Deadline is March 31, 1997.

Legal Shock

No purchase necessary. Contest is open to anyone except employees of Wizard Press, Image Comics, their immediate families, Stan Lee, Jim Lee, Lee Marzan, Joe General, Lee, the Lee's organization and any other Lees we missed. Print your name, date of birth, address, city, state, zip and telephone number with area code on the official entry form or a 3-by-5-inch piece of card and attach your messed up entry to the form or card. Enter as many times as you like. Mail each entry separately to "Mess It Up" Contest, c/o Wizard Press, P.O. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118. Be sure to include necessary information on completed form; do not staple. But you can photocopy the entry form before filling it out if you don't want to mess up your magazine. All entries become property of Wizard Press and none will be returned. No taxes, liens, [illegible] state and local. None will be the responsibility of the prize winner. No cash equivalent or substitute prizes will be offered. Prizes only awarded in the name of the contest winner and are not transferable. Offer void where prohibited, regulated or restricted by law or in manner inconsistent with the purposes and rules herein. Speaking of [illegible], [illegible] that all unclaimed prizes [illegible]. The Harlan Warfold has long [illegible] the hot [illegible] Jaem. **All entries must be received at contest headquarters by March 31, 1997.** Wizard Press is not responsible for late, lost, misdirected or mutilated entries. Odds of winning will be determined by the number of valid entries received prior to the closing date of the contest. Prize winners will be selected based on originality and creativity from among all properly completed entries by Wizard Press and Image Comics. Judging will take place on April 15, 1997.

For a list of winners, available after April 15, 1997, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to: "Mess It Up" Winners, c/o Wizard Press, P.O. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118.

"Mess it Up" Entry Form

Name _____ Date of Birth _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Number (with area code) _____

Did you attach your entry?

THE TOY CHEST

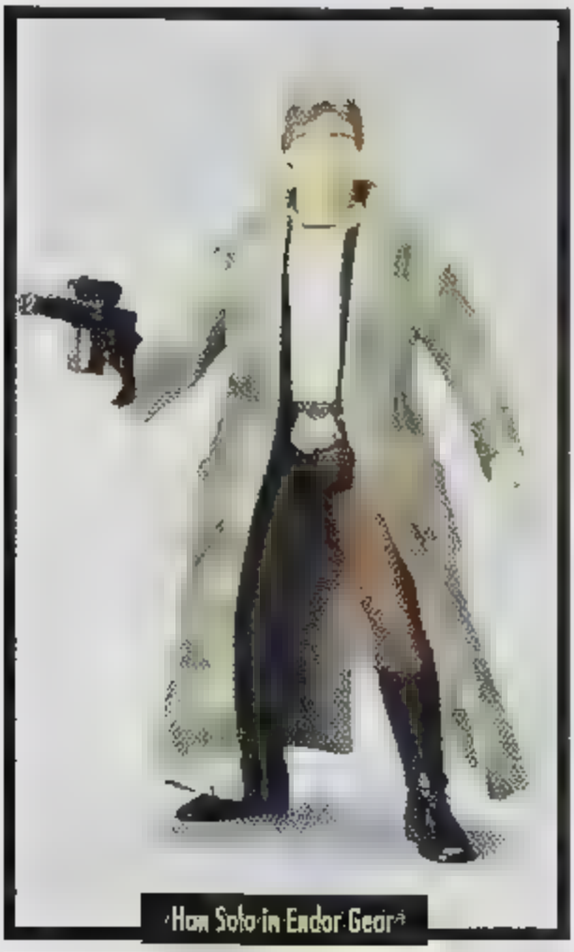
McFARLANE'S MONSTERS ARRIVE!

After months of anticipation, McFarlane Toys unveils its exciting new "Monsters" toy line (first previewed in *Wizard* #64's "Toy Chest"). Though still awaiting a final name for the line, four monsters—**Dracula**, the **Werewolf**, **Frankenstein** and the **Hunchback**—kick off the toys, with each 4- to 5-inch blister-carded figure arriving in stores as early as April. Anticipate a $9.99 retail for each two-by-three-foot two-level diorama playset.

BY SCOTT BEATTY

THE RETURN OF "JEDI" FIGURES!

Kenner heads into March with four new Power of the Force releases based on characters from "Return of the Jedi," which returns to theaters with the Special Edition release of the film this March, including updated footage and special effects. **Han Solo in Endor Gear**, **Lando Calrissian in Skiff Guard Disguise**, Jabba the Hutt's right hand alien **Bib Fortuna** and the nasty **Emperor Palpatine** bring the grand total of new Kenner Star Wars action figure releases to nearly 50... with *many* more to come.



Han Solo in Endor Gear

Lando Calrissian in Skiff Guard Disguise

Bib Fortuna

Emperor Palpatine

ACTION FIGURE SPOTLIGHT:

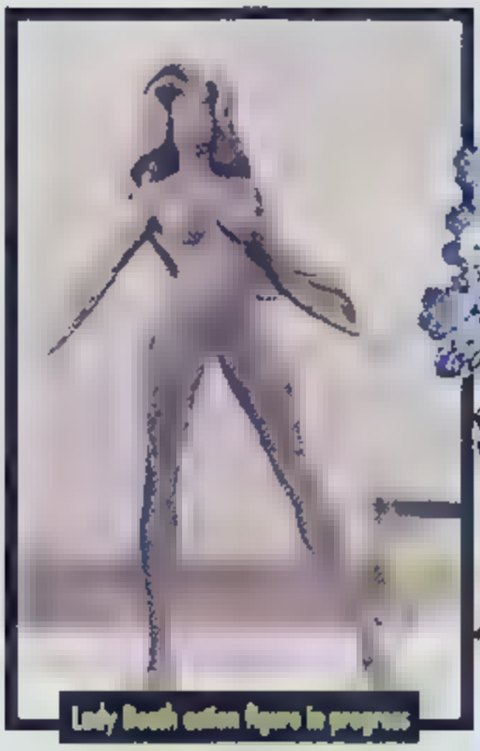
TOY BIZ'S MUTANT MONSTERS

We first reported on Toy Biz's all-new **Mutant Monsters** (featuring scary versions of, in order **Rogue, Wolverine, Mr. Sinister, Mystique** and **Cyclops**) back in issue #64's "Toy Chest" — and here they are, decked out in all their mutated glory. See below for the characters *sans* snap-on monster mutation.

BIG M.A.C. ATTACK

Eisner Award-winning sculptor **Clayburn Moore**, whose credits in the collectible statue market include such gems as the Pitt and Lady Death, recently announced the formation of **Moore Action Collectibles** in close association with **Chaos! Comics**, A division of Moore Creations. M.A.C. is committed to the licensing, manufacturing and marketing of superbly sculpted and packaged action figures for the collectibles market. Clayburn Moore is no stranger to toys, either—just check out Playmates' late Savage Dragon line for his beautiful rendition of She-Dragon.

According to Chaos! Comics President Brian Pulido, M.A.C.'s first assortment is scheduled for a fall release and will include the Chaos! fan favorites **Lady Death, Evil Ernie, Purgatori** and **Chastity**. Suggested retail for each figure, which will be offered exclusively through direct market outlets, will be approximately $9.95.



Lady Death action figure in progress

BATMAN VS. CATWOMAN

After months of waiting, Hasbro New Ventures' 12-inch **Batman vs. Catwoman** two-pack is finally hitting toy shelves. Exclusive to Toys R Us, the duo is packaged as part of the late Legends of Batman line and arrives in a box featuring exclusive DC Comics artwork. "It's Batman from *Batman* #515, where he finally returns after having his back broken by Bane," says Hasbro New Ventures Senior Marketing Director Vinnie D'Alleva, distinguishing the line from the

Toys R Us' 12-inch Batman and Catwoman

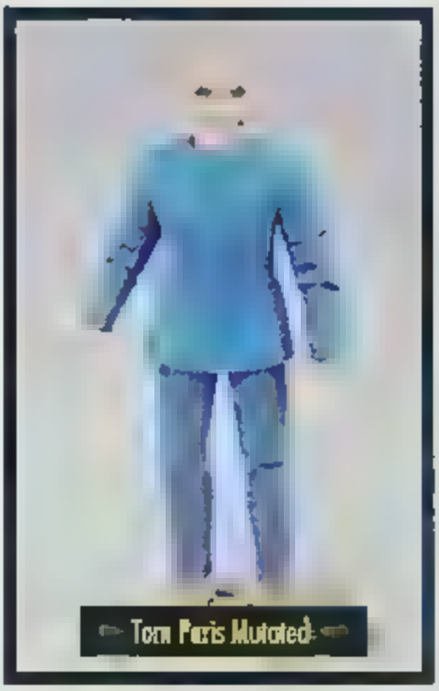
company's recent History of Batman three-pack exclusive to FAO Schwarz. "And it's Catwoman from the modern comics. This is the first time any DC heroine has been done in the 12-inch form. It's also the first 12-inch female figure Hasbro has done since the [1965] Nurse figure for G.I. Joe."

While both figures are fully poseable, New Ventures' Catwoman stands out with waist, shoulder, elbow, wrist, head and knee articulation. Catty's gloves and boots are actually sculpted as part of her body, flaunting the comic version's fetish leather. Batman himself is an all-new sculpt. Now in Toys R Us stores everywhere, each two-pack retails for approximately $39.99.

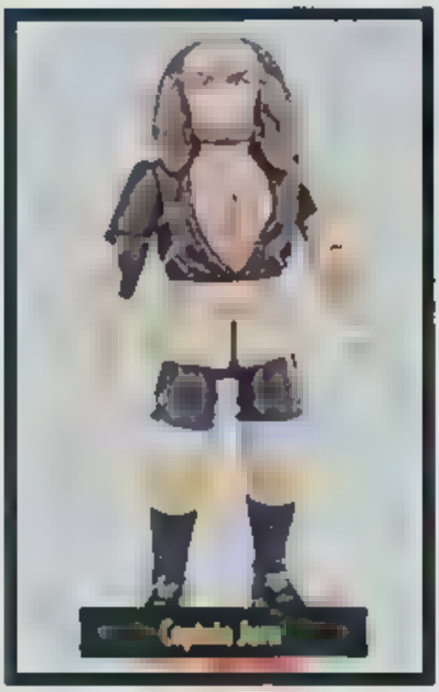
RESISTANCE IS FUTILE!

In November 1996, Playmates renewed its master toy licensing agreement with Viacom Consumer Products to produce a variety of toy lines based on the mega-popular **Star Trek** film and television franchises. Since 1992, Playmates has been producing toy lines devoted to all things Trek, including the most recent "Star Trek: First Contact" theatrical release. And as the International Toy Fair unfolds in New York City this month, Playmates will unveil new action-oriented toys based on upcoming Star Trek films, television episodes, novels and comic books.

Expect to see the following new additions to the company's basic figure assortment arriving this spring: **Captain Jurn, Tom Paris Mutated** (from the "Voyager" episode "Threshold"), **Seska the Cardassian, Captain Kirk in Environmental Suit, Captain Benjamin Sisko** (with goatee), **Professor Data** (from the "Next Generation" episode "All Good Things"), **Captain Crusher** (from



Tom Paris Mutated



Captain Jon

"Next Generation"'s "All Good Things") and **Dr. Crusher** (from "Next Generation"'s "Generations"). And finally, after much anticipation, the **Gorn Captain** (from the "Classic Trek" episode "Arena") and the **Klingon** (from "Classic Trek"'s "A Private Little War") will begin shipping.

In the 9" Collector Series, expect to see **Lt. Hikaru Sulu, Ensign Pavel Chekov, Q in Judges Robes, Lt. Jadzia Dax, Capt. Benjamin Sisko** (with goatee), **Romulan Commander** and **Chief Miles O'Brien**.

ASH/HELLSHOCK TOYS!

New toy company **Palisades Toys** kicks off 1997 with two popular comic book properties ready for adaptation into action figures. First up is Joe Quesada and Jimmy Palmiotti's hotshot fireman hero **Ash** from their Event Comics title, which is also set to become a DreamWorks SKG feature film in 1998. The multi-poseable (six points of articulation!) Ash figure is scheduled for an April release. Palisades Toys will follow up in the summer with the first-ever **Hellshock** figure, based on Jae Lee's Image Comics character.

"We want our toy business to provide top quality figures that will be fun to play with and enjoyable to collect," says company President Mike Horn. "Look for custom paint jobs, unique and innovative articulations, individually numbered and limited production runs and other points of difference in Palisades' action figures."

Ash action figure prototype

SUPER-DUPER TROOPERS

As director Paul Verhoeven's adaptation of the classic Robert Heinlein sci-fi novel **"Starship Troopers"** hits theaters this summer, Galoob attacks toy shelves with scaled-down toys based on the film. Although the standard action figure lines are still hush-hush—including the film's creepy alien bugs—the new Action Fleet **Pulse Cannon, Drop Ship** and **TAC Fighter** are just a few of the items Galoob plans on releasing to monopolize on what director and stars are hoping will be the "Independence Day" of 1997. W

If Wizard staffer Scott Beatty were a toy, he'd have ball-joint hips, light-pipe eyes and a power punch!

WISH LIST

2) Classic X-Men

Keep sending them Top 10 lists! You've already made a difference! Drop us a note with your "dream figures" at:

c/o Wizard Press
151 Wells Avenue
Congers, NY 10920

Or e-mail us at:

We Try Our
to Make th

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MCFARLANE
TOYS

the Wizard ACTION FIGURE Price Guide

The toys in this guide are priced as follows: mint on card (MOC) or mint in box (MIB) condition, meaning that the toys have never been removed from their original packaging; these prices are listed on the left. Items not in any packaging or missing any of their original accessories vary significantly and are generally worth the prices listed on the right. A listing marked with a "—" means that particular figure didn't have widespread distribution as of press time.

Remember: This is only a guide, and prices can vary for a variety of reasons, including local scarcity.

ADVENTURES OF BATMAN & ROBIN
KENNER (1996-CURRENT)

	MOC/MIB	LOOSE
Bane	15.00	4.00
Bola Trap Robin	6.00	1.75
Cyber Gear Batman	6.00	1.75
Glider Robin	10.00	2.00
Hover Jet Batman	6.00	1.75
Paraglide Batman	6.00	1.75
Pogo Stick Joker	12.00	2.50
Ra's Al Ghul	10.00	2.00
Radar Scope Batman	6.00	1.75
Rocketpack Batman	6.00	1.75

ADVENTURES OF BATMAN & ROBIN CRIME SQUAD
KENNER (1996-CURRENT)

Bomb Control Batman	6.00	1.75
Fast Pursuit Batman	6.00	1.75
Skycopter Batman (Deluxe)	12.00	3.00
Tri-Wing Batman (Deluxe)	12.00	3.00

ADVENTURES OF BATMAN & ROBIN CRIME SQUAD (VEHICLES & ACCESSORIES)
KENNER (1996-CURRENT)

Night Sphere with Batman Figure	20.00	—

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN
TOY BIZ (1998-CURRENT)

Bio Spider Man (Venom containment pod)	6.00	1.75
Spider-Man 2099	6.00	1.75
Spider Woman (black widow assault gear)	12.00	3.00
Stealth Venom (black)	20.00	4.00
Stealth Venom (clear)	10.00	2.00
Total Armor Venom with Spider armor	10.00	2.25

BATMAN ANIMATED SERIES
KENNER (1992-1995)

Anti-Freeze Batman	10.00	2.25
Bane	18.00	3.50
Bola Trap Robin	10.00	2.25
Bruce Wayne	20.00	4.00
Catwoman	30.00	6.00
Clayface	20.00	5.00
Combat Belt Batman	25.00	5.00
Cyber Gear Batman	8.00	1.75
Dick Grayson/Robin	18.00	4.00
Glider Robin	15.00	3.00
Ground Assault Batman	12.00	3.00
High Wire Batman	12.00	3.00
Infrared Batman	10.00	2.25
Joker (laughing gas)	22.00	4.00
Killer Croc	20.00	5.00
Knightstar Batman	10.00	2.25
Lightning Strike Batman	10.00	2.25
Man-Bat	20.00	5.00
Mech-Wing Batman	10.00	2.25
Mr. Freeze	20.00	5.00
Ninja Robin	15.00	4.00
Penguin	65.00	15.00
Poison Ivy	40.00	10.00
Power Vision Batman	15.00	3.50
Radar Scope Batman	8.00	1.75
Rapid Attack Batman	8.00	1.75
Riddler	35.00	7.00
Robin	12.00	4.00
Scarecrow	20.00	4.00
Sky Dive Batman	12.00	3.00
Tornado Batman	8.00	1.75
Turbojet Batman	15.00	3.00
Two-Face	22.00	6.00

BATMAN ANIMATED SERIES (VEHICLES & ACCESSORIES)
KENNER (1992-1995)

15-inch Ultimate Batman	25.00	6.00
Aero Bat	15.00	4.00
B.A.T.V. Vehicle	10.00	2.25
Bat Signal Jet	15.00	4.00
Batcave Command Center	45.00	12.00
Batcycle	15.00	3.00
Batmobile	35.00	8.00
Batplane	35.00	8.50
Bruce Wayne Street Jet	40.00	11.00
Electronic Crime Stalker	15.00	4.00
Hoverbat	15.00	4.00
Hydro Bat	9.00	2.25
Ice Hammer	15.00	4.00
Jokermobile	35.00	6.00
Mega Power Pack (two-figure set Batman & Robin)	20.00	5.00
Robin Dragster	300.00	120.00

BATMAN ANIMATED SERIES CRIME SQUAD
KENNER (1995)

Air Assault Batman	8.00	1.75
Land Strike Batman	8.00	1.75
Piranha Blade Batman	8.00	1.75
Sea Claw Batman	8.00	1.75
Ski Blast Robin	8.00	1.75
Stealthwing Batman	8.00	1.75
Torpedo Batman	8.00	1.75

BATMAN ANIMATED SERIES CRIME SQUAD (VEHICLES & ACCESSORIES)
KENNER (1995)

Batcycle (with purple & silver bike)	12.00	3.00
Triple Attack Jet	15.00	4.00

BATMAN DARK KNIGHT COLLECTION
KENNER (1990-1991)

Blast Shield Batman (Dk)	30.00	[illegible]
Bruce Wayne Batman	20.00	4.00
Claw Climber Batman (Dk)	20.00	[illegible]
Crime Attack Batman	18.00	4.00
Iron Winch Batman	15.00	3.00
Knock Out Joker	75.00	15.00
Night Glider Batman (Dk)	40.00	10.00
Powerwing Batman	30.00	7.00
Shadow Wing Batman	15.00	4.00
Sky Escape Joker	25.00	6.00
Tec-Shield Batman (black backpack)	25.00	6.00
Tec-Shield Batman (gold backpack)	18.00	4.00
Thunderwhip Batman	30.00	[illegible]
Wall Scaler Batman	18.00	4.00

BATMAN DARK KNIGHT COLLECTION (VEHICLES & ACCESSORIES)
KENNER (1990-1991)

Batcopter	40.00	8.00
Batcycle	25.00	6.00
Batjet	40.00	8.00
Batmobile	25.00	6.00
Bola Bullet	25.00	6.00
The Joker Cycle	25.00	6.00
Skyblade (Canada only)	50.00	13.00
Strikewing	25.00	6.00
Turbojet Batwing	50.00	13.00

BATMAN FOREVER
KENNER (1995-CURRENT)

Attack Wing Batman (Dk)	12.00	4.00
Batarang Batman	10.00	2.25
Blast Cape Batman (deflectors are 3/4 yellow, 1/4 black)	20.00	5.00
Blast Cape Batman (deflectors are 1/4 yellow, 3/4 black)	10.00	2.25
Bruce Wayne-Batman (Target Exclusive)	12.00	3.00
Fireguard Batman	10.00	2.25
Hydro Claw Robin	8.00	1.75
Ice Blade Batman	12.00	3.00
Laser Disc Batman (Dk)	15.00	4.00
Light Wing Batman (Dk)	15.00	4.00
Manta Ray Batman	10.00	2.25
Martial Arts Robin (Dk)	15.00	4.00
Neon Armor Batman	12.00	3.00
Night Flight Batman	10.00	2.25
Night Hunter Batman (claw accessories at bottom of blaster)	8.00	1.75
Night Hunter Batman (claw accessories at top of blaster)	20.00	5.00
Nightwing (Dk)	15.00	4.00
Power Beacon Batman	10.00	2.25
Recon Hunter Batman	10.00	2.25
The Riddler (trapping brain-drain helmet, green body & black ?s)	15.00	3.00
The Riddler (Target exclusive, re-paint)	12.00	—
The Riddler (Cod-blasting question mark bazooka, black body with green ?s)	12.00	3.00
Skyboard Robin	10.00	2.00
Solar Shield Batman	8.00	1.75
Sonar Sensor Batman	8.00	1.75
Street Biker Robin	10.00	2.25
Street Racer Batman	8.00	1.75
Talking Riddler (Dk)	20.00	4.00
Tide Racer Robin (Target Exclusive)	12.00	3.00
Transforming Bruce Wayne	12.00	3.00
Transforming Dick Grayson (black mask)	20.00	4.00
Transforming Dick Grayson (brown cape)	18.00	4.00
Transforming Dick Grayson (white mask)	10.00	2.25
Triple Strike Robin	10.00	2.25
Two-Face	14.00	3.00
Wing Blast Batman	8.00	1.75

BATMAN FOREVER (VEHICLES & ACCESSORIES)
KENNER (1995-CURRENT)

25-inch Batman Plush Doll	20.00	5.00
15-inch Robin Plush Doll	30.00	7.00
[illegible]	20.00	5.00
Batboat	20.00	5.00
Batcave	75.00	15.00
Batwing	25.00	4.75
Electronic Batmobile	35.00	7.00
Guardians of Gotham City (Batman & Robin; Two-Pack)	15.00	4.00
Radio-Controlled Batmobile	25.00	6.00
Robin Cycle	15.00	4.00
Talking Batman Doll	20.00	5.00
Triple Action Vehicle	25.00	6.00
Two-Face & The Riddler (Two-Pack)	20.00	4.00
Wayne Manor Batcave Compound	65.00	13.00

BIG SHOT

THE FLASH & GREEN LANTERN
Batman: Total Justice

We gotta give credit where credit is due—for the first Kyle Rayner figure ever, Kenner did serve up a nicely sculpted version of the current GL. Ah, but there's the rub—"sculpted" being the operative word. The Total Justice figures make for nice sculptures, but lack the play value of more articulated figures. You can't beat the Mike Wieringo-like Flash, but unless you plant the Scarlet Speedster's feet just right, he falls over like a lead weight. Our recommendation to the design folks at Kenner would be to walk the fine line between looks and articulation. Plus, we'd much rather have a Cosmic Treadmill for the Flash or a Power Battery for GL than ol' that "Fractal Techgear."

BATMAN LEGENDS OF BATMAN
KENNER (1994-CURRENT)

Buccaneer Batman	12.00	3.00
Catwoman	22.00	4.50
Crusader Batman	12.00	2.50
Crusader Robin	10.00	2.25
Cyborg Batman	12.00	2.50
Dark Rider Batman	15.00	4.00
Dark Warrior Batman	10.00	2.25
Desert Knight Batman (Dk)	12.00	3.00
Energy Surge Batman (Dk)	12.00	3.00
First Strike Robin	12.00	3.00
Flightpack Batman (Dk)	15.00	4.00
Future Batman (no bat symbol)	15.00	4.00
Future Batman (with bat symbol)	10.00	2.50
Gladiator Batman	10.00	2.25
Joker (snapping jaw)	20.00	5.00
Knightquest Batman	15.00	4.00
Knightfall Batman	10.00	2.25
Laughing Man Joker	12.00	2.50
Long Bow Batman	10.00	2.25
Nightwing Robin	12.00	3.00
Power Guardian Batman	12.00	3.00
Riddler (with Firing Question Mark Launcher)	20.00	4.00
Samurai Batman	10.00	2.25
Silver Knight Batman (Dk)	15.00	4.00
Ultra Armor Batman	12.00	2.50
Viking Batman	10.00	2.25

BATMAN LEGENDS OF BATMAN WARNER BROTHERS EXCLUSIVES (METALLIC RE-PAINTS)
KENNER (1995-CURRENT)

Crusader Batman	15.00	4.00
Crusader Robin	15.00	4.00
Cyborg Batman	15.00	4.00
Dark Warrior Batman	15.00	4.00
Future Batman	15.00	4.00
Knightquest Batman	15.00	4.75
Long Bow Batman	15.00	4.00
Nightwing Robin	15.00	4.75
Power Guardian Batman	15.00	4.00
Riddler	15.00	4.75
Samurai Batman	15.00	4.00
Viking Batman	15.00	4.00

BATMAN LEGENDS OF BATMAN (VEHICLES & ACCESSORIES)
KENNER (1994-CURRENT)

100th Edition Batman	80.00	25.00
Batcycle	12.00	3.00
Batmobile	25.00	6.00
Egyptian Batman vs. Egyptian Catwoman (two-pack)	22.00	4.50
Pirate Batman vs. Pirate Two-Face (two-pack)	22.00	4.50
Skybat	12.00	3.00
Ultimate Knightquest Batman	12.00	3.00

BATMAN MASK OF THE PHANTASM ANIMATED MOVIE
KENNER (1993-1994)

Decoy Batman	35.00	4.00
Jet Pack Joker (green face)	25.00	6.00
Jet Pack Joker (white face)	25.00	5.00
Phantasm	30.00	6.00
Rapid Attack Batman	8.00	1.75
Retro Batman	10.00	2.25
Tornado Batman	10.00	2.25
Total Armor Batman	10.00	2.25

BATMAN RETURNS
KENNER (1990-1991)

Aero Strike Batman	12.00	2.50
Air Attack Batman	12.00	2.50
Arctic Batman	15.00	4.00
Bola Strike Batman (Toys R Us exclusive)	25.00	6.00
Bruce Wayne	18.00	4.00
Catwoman	25.00	6.00
Claw Climber Batman (Toys R Us exclusive)	35.00	8.00
Crime Attack Batman	18.00	4.00
Deep Dive Batman	15.00	4.00
Firebolt Batman	65.00	12.00
Hydro Charge Batman	10.00	2.25
Jungle Tracker Batman	10.00	2.25
Laser Batman	15.00	4.00
Night Climber Batman	10.00	2.25
Penguin Commandos	15.00	4.00
Penguin	35.00	7.00
Polar Blast Batman (Toys R Us exclusive)	25.00	6.00
Powerwing Batman	20.00	5.00
Robin	18.00	4.50
Rocket Blast Batman	40.00	12.00
Shadow Wing Batman	15.00	4.00
Sky Winch Batman	15.00	4.00
Thunderwhip Batman	15.00	4.00

BATMAN RETURNS (VEHICLES & ACCESSORIES)
KENNER (1990-1991)

15-inch Batman	50.00	12.00
Batcave Command Center	50.00	11.00
Batmissile Batmobile	65.00	15.00
Batmobile	50.00	12.00
Batskiboat	60.00	20.00
Bruce Wayne Custom Coupe	35.00	7.00
Camo Attack Batmobile with Batman figure	30.00	7.00
Laser Blade Cycle	25.00	6.00
Penguin Umbrella Jet	40.00	12.00
Robin Jet Foil Cycle	40.00	11.00
Sky Blade	45.00	9.00
Sky Drop Airship	30.00	7.00
Turbojet Batwing	35.00	7.00

BATMAN TOTAL JUSTICE
KENNER (1996)

Aquaman (Black Armor)	15.00	4.00
Aquaman (Gold Armor)	20.00	4.00
Batman	8.00	1.75
Darkseid	8.00	1.75
Despero	8.00	1.75
Fractal Armor Batman	8.00	1.75
Green Arrow	8.00	1.75
Flash	8.00	1.75
Green Lantern	8.00	1.75
Robin	8.00	1.75
Superman	8.00	1.75

2.40
1.75
1.50
1.75
1.50
5.00
2.25
2.25

Professor X with Sentinel Control Panel
10.00 2.25

Wonstar (Surprise Attack Team, from the Phoenix Saga series—blue carded)
10.00
Wonstar (Surprise Attack Team, from the

Wolverine with High-Tech Training Helmet (4th Edition, repaint; Kay-Bee exclusive

Omega Red II with Whipping Tentacle (Flashback series; black or red outfit)
8.00 1.75
Phoenix with Fiery Phoenix Power (Phoenix

(Flashback series) 15.00

TOY BIZ (1995)
Beast
Exclusive

TOY BIZ 1994)
Beast vs. Spider-Man (web-shooter,
15.00

(3rd Edition) 8.00
Cable with Air Assault (4th Edition)

Cable w/Sleep Sex Bear (5th) 8.00
Cable with Mutant Rearing Attack

Eraser with Phoenix

Sabretooth (Metallic)
Shatterstar (Shatterstar link)
2.00
Spy Wolverine (black)

TOY BIZ (1995)

HOMEMADE HEROES

THE ARENA FOR FAN-MADE ACTION FIGURES.

GRAND PRIZE

KINGDOM COME

Eric Dlugokinski of Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

From left: Green Lantern was born from a G.I. Joe Extreme Lt. Stone head and a Samurai Iron Man body, the Ray radiates from a Black Costume Spider Man figure; Wonder Woman was made from a Toy Biz Phoenix; Superman was once a Toy Biz Gladiator; Red Robin stems from a Blacklash figure; and Power Woman was created from a Toy Biz Phoenix (with whittled-down hair). Cool, huh?

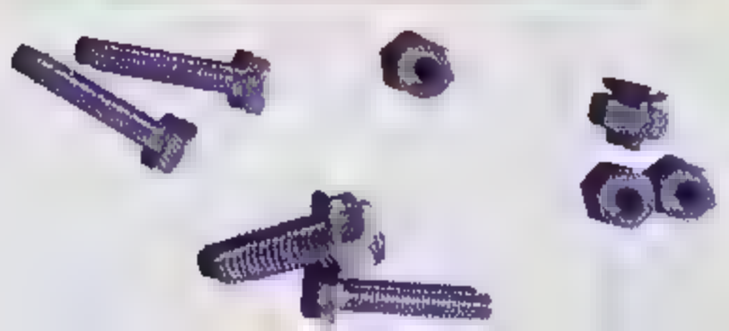
RAZOR

Christopher S. Johnson of East Hazel Crest, Ill.

Whittling down the hair on this repainted Toy Biz Psylocke figure, Christopher truly gives life to London Night's Bad Girl.

All of these fine figures were made from plain old, ordinary figures and household materials, and each of the ultratalented creators will receive an X-Men penholder laser sculpture. The Runner-Up will also get a Spider-Man laser sculpture, and the Grand Prize Winner takes home all that stuff plus a Maximum Carnage laser sculpture. Amazing work, people!

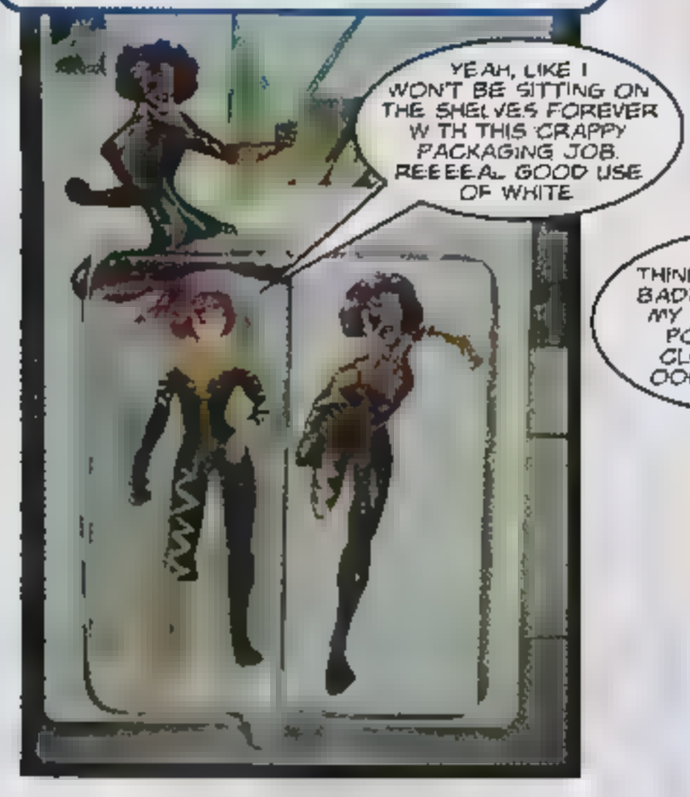
A ton of thanks goes out to the folks at Laser Mach—we appreciate these snazzy prizes (as do the winners)!



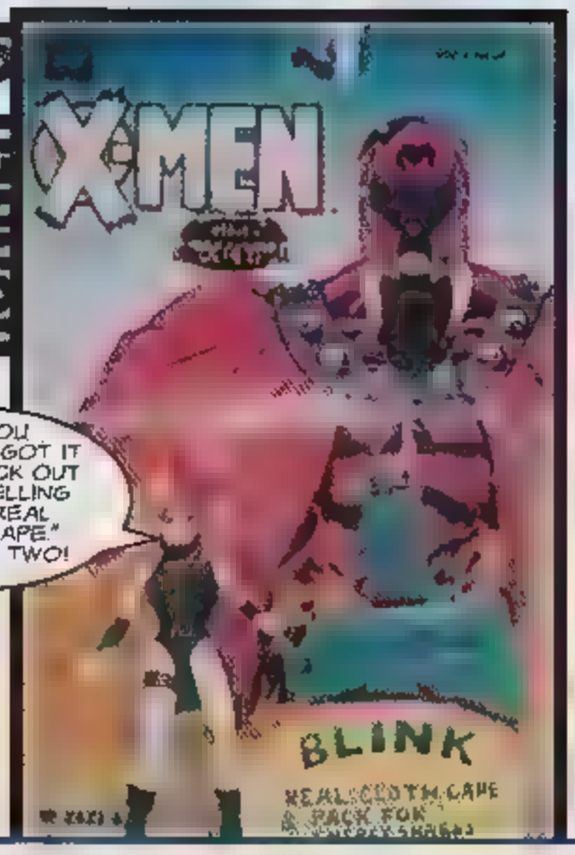
VELOCITY

David R. Ludwig of Williamsburg, Va.

The cute 'n' fast Cyberforce member Velocity speeds into the action figure scene as a repainted WildC.A.T.s Voodoo figure. Nice work!



RUNNER-UP



BLINK

Chadwick A. Tate of Fries, Va.

Don't blink (groan) or you might not notice this Earthworm Jim Queen figure, touched up with some putty and thread to make the "Age of Apocalypse" beauty.

RORSCHACH

Jeff Outlaw of Honolulu, Hawaii

From the pages of *Watchmen*, Rorschach stands in the shadows as a mystery man. ..mysterious in the sense that we can't quite figure out what he's made from.

KISS

James Colburn of Houston, Texas

I want to rock 'n' roll all night...and party every day with these Kiss figures made from the Power of the Force's Luke Skywalker and Han Solo figures. Add a little Kiss make-up (or Super Sculpey, in this case), and these guys are ready for opening night at the Garden!

HEY!

If you're interested in entering the homemade figure contest, send well-lit, clear color photographs (No Polaroids, and put 'em in a cool or funny pose!), along with your name, address, description of how you created your figure, and your full phone number (including area code) to:

HOMEMADE HEROES
c/o Wizard Press
PO Box 118
Congers, NY 10920-0118

Storming the Castle

W

nda Medley's *Castle Wa*

Linda Medley's fairy tale **Castle Waiting** delivers lighthearted, straightforward **fun**

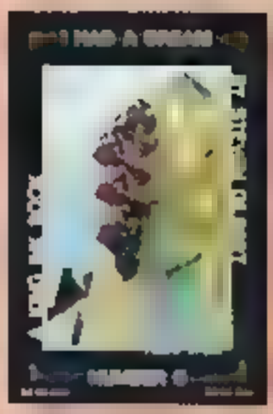
by palmer jr.

The ongoing *Castle Waiting* series begins [illegible] shop now. If you can't find it anywhere, drop a line to Olio, P.O. Box 1012, Petaluma, CA 94953-1012. Copies [illegible] *The Curse of Brambly Hedge*, are also still available for $5.95 (plus $1 for postage) from the same address.

Linda Medley's Recommended Reading

"I got a lot of comics in San Diego last summer, and my favorite was [illegible] Gary Schumer and Ollie Dillel Dawn Free Press. It's a collection of slice-of-life vignettes, many of them told in a "ViewMaster" style, [illegible] Mass children's books *Night Before Christmas*, *Summer Vacation* and *School Spirits*. *Innocent Bystander* is funny, sappy and perfect [illegible] It's available from Gary at 1212 Academy Ave. #2, Pittsburgh, PA 15228. For just $5, he'll send you both #1 and #2. Such a deal.

Recommended Reading

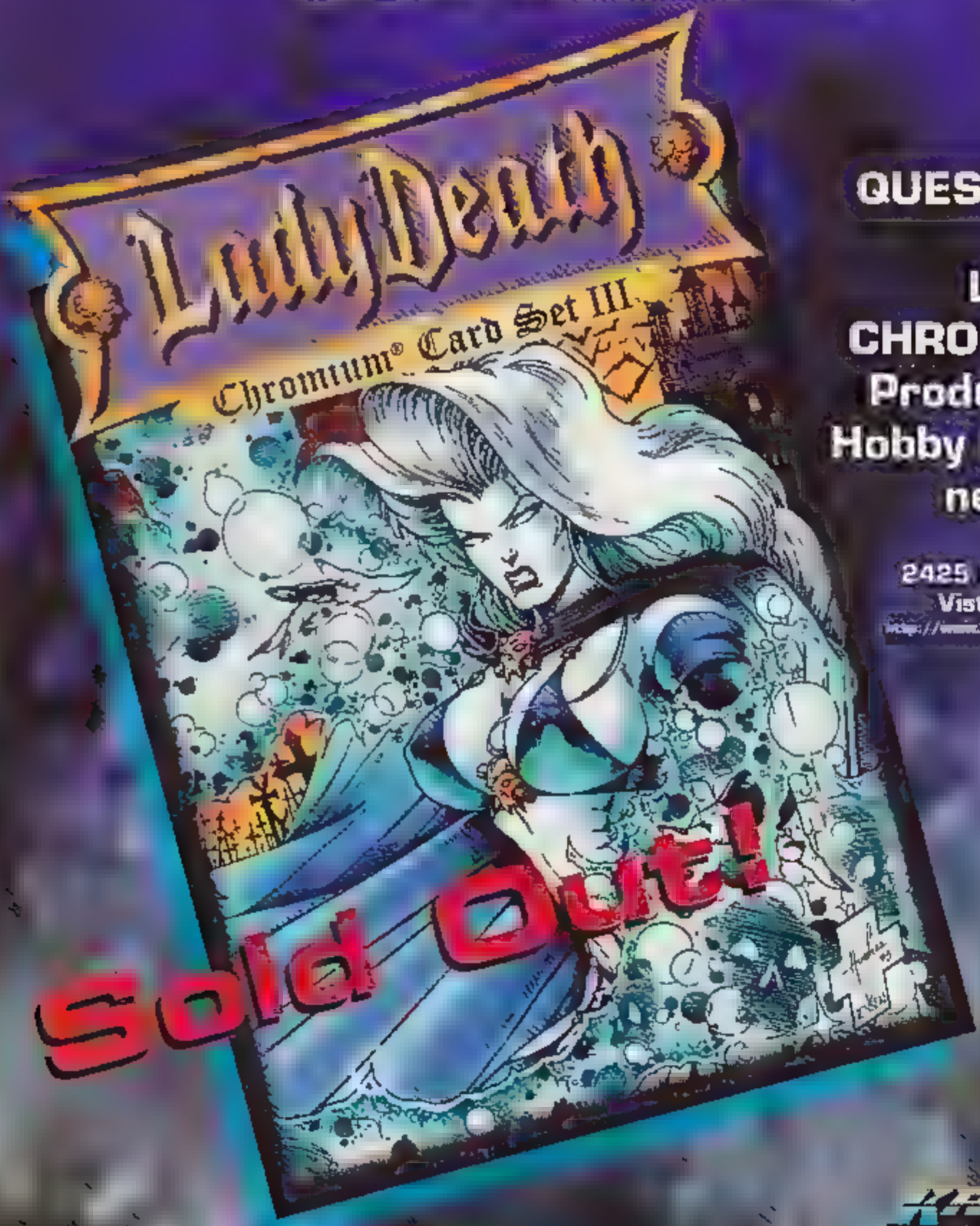


I Had a Dream If there's one drawback to the self-publishing explosion of the last few years, it's that it's become almost impossible to keep track of all of the new comics that regularly start up. Case in point: Steven Gilbert's *I Had a Dream*, which began publication in the summer of '95. The sixth and final issue of this dream-inspired series was released this past October, and I'm only getting around to mentioning it now! But just because I'm slow doesn't mean you shouldn't check out this comic. Gilbert delineates some very strange dreams through a dense black and white style in the almost wordless main story of every issue, and frequently backs these up with short autobiographical strips ("Drugs," "Took at Lollapalooza 1994," and "Denizens of the Comic Shop," for example) that show off his dark humor. You can still get all six issues direct from the publisher for $2.95 each (plus $ postage) by writing to Ring Ink, 262 Patterson St., Newmarket, Ontario, Canada L3Y 3L8. Gilbert also plans to continue publishing a series of one shots, the first of which, titled *Gardenback*, will be released in March.

Barry Windsor-Smith Storyteller Tired of crappy comics that don't give you enough bang for your buck? Then why not pick up *Barry Windsor-Smith Storyteller*? Windsor-Smith is at the peak of his form with the three ongoing stories, "The Paradox Man," "The Freebooters," and "Young Gods," he's created for this oversized full-color comic. Once you open this book, it's impossible not to get lost in the beautiful art and entertaining (and sometimes hilarious) stories. *Storyteller* will take you back to when comics were fun to read. You should be able to find *Barry Windsor-Smith Storyteller* at any comic store, but you can contact Dark Horse Comics at 10956 SE Main St., Milwaukie, OR 97222 or call (800) 862-0052 for more info.

CHROMIUM GRAPHICS

OUR RESUME



ANY QUESTIONS?

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KROME PRODUCTIONS

THE SKINNY

Comic book REVIEWS from the *Wizard* Editors

THE SCORING

6 THE BEST · 5 EXCELLENT · 4 GOOD · 3 SO-SO · 2 UGH · 1 CRAPOLA

GREEN LANTERN

This Lantern's light shines bright

Genre: Superhero action/adventure
Publisher: DC Comics
Creative team: Ron Marz, Darryl Banks and Romeo Tanghal
Price/Frequency: $1.75/Monthly

What You Need to Know: Hip commercial artist Kyle Rayner was given the last existing Green Lantern power ring after his predecessor Hal Jordan, went rogue. The ring is considered the greatest weapon in the universe because it can do anything its wearer wills it to do.

The Good: First and foremost, Kyle Rayner is a great character. He's someone you can relate to, someone who tries his best and often makes mistakes. And it feels like the mistakes he makes are the same ones you'd make if you had been given the Green Lantern ring.

Many of the problems he faces in his stories are normal, everyday dilemmas. Whether it's relationship woes or getting an art job in before deadline, you ultimately care about what's gonna happen to Kyle. As a matter of fact, you're never bored when Kyle and girlfriend Donna Troy take up as much as half an issue to just talk about their relationship and where it's headed.

And you're reminded that Kyle's fairly new at the superhero biz, which makes his triumphs and follies even more entertaining. Even though the ring is powerful, he still flinches when a tiger attacks him (like in issue #82).

Besides being light and fun, this book is pretty accessible to new readers as there's usually a monthly recap of Kyle's powers and general information. Storylines are usually contained to only one issue, and the side-plots are strong enough to keep you interested but never overwhelm the story. The first page of every issue almost always draws you in with a fast, exciting opening.

The Bad: Kyle's insecurity as Green Lantern can sometimes be too much. It seems like Kyle is always trying to "measure up" to being a hero. It was fine for that three-issue "Heroes Quest" (issues #71-#73), but since Hal Jordan's death, it's on overdrive.

And recently, the ghost of Hal never seems to let this book stand on its own two legs. It's annoying that now that Hal is dead, Kyle constantly whines, "Hal Jordan was the best, and I can only hope I'll be as good as him..." It seems kinda weird that Kyle's so weepy-eyed towards a guy who a) he hardly knew, b) tried to kill him many times, and c) attempted to remake reality.

The current storyline is a rehash of a previous one where the villain Fatality cashes in on the often-used "I'm out to get the old Green Lantern Corp and you're next" gimmick. (That was last used in *GL* #74 with Darkseid's son Grayven.) It's an interesting idea (especially since Kyle is the only GL anyone can pick on now) but should be presented differently somehow.

The Buzz: Fans are comfortable with Kyle Rayner as Green Lantern. Darryl Banks is going to share penciling duties with Jeff Johnson (*Justice League: A Midsummer's Nightmare*) in '97, which'll reinforce the already good art.

The Skinny: *Green Lantern* is a consistently entertaining read with a very likable character and solid superhero action done in a way that you can identify with as a reader.

The Verdict: 5

(At left) *The appeal of Green Lantern is that he makes mistakes*

(At right) *He also has problems like splitting time between his job and being a hero*

UNTOLD TALES OF SPIDER-MAN

One of today's best spun comics

Genre: Superhero action/adventure
Publisher: Marvel Comics
Creative Team: Kurt Busiek, Pat O'Liffe and Al Williamson
Price/Frequency: 99 cents/Monthly

What You Need to Know: These all-new "retro" stories take place between early issues of *Amazing Spider-Man*. High school student Peter Parker is bitten by a radioactive spider, gains incredible spider-like powers and becomes the costumed crime-fighter Spider-Man.

The Good: This is Spider-Man at his best: a hard-luck hero who never wins. Peter saves the day as Spidey countless times, but he still scrapes money to help Aunt May pay the rent, has girlfriend problems and is picked on by school bullies.

Kurt Busiek is on target with characterization (good examples are Betty Brant as she contures solo in issue #11 and J. Jonah Jameson fighting for *Daily Bugle* ownership in #15). You view these characters as real people, with real problems. Even the new supporting characters (like the tragic Sally Avril) fit in.

Newcomers will like *Untold Tales*. Stories begin and end with in each issue, and story flashbacks are common. Also there is an "origin box" at the top of the first page, clueing in everyone on who Spider-Man is.

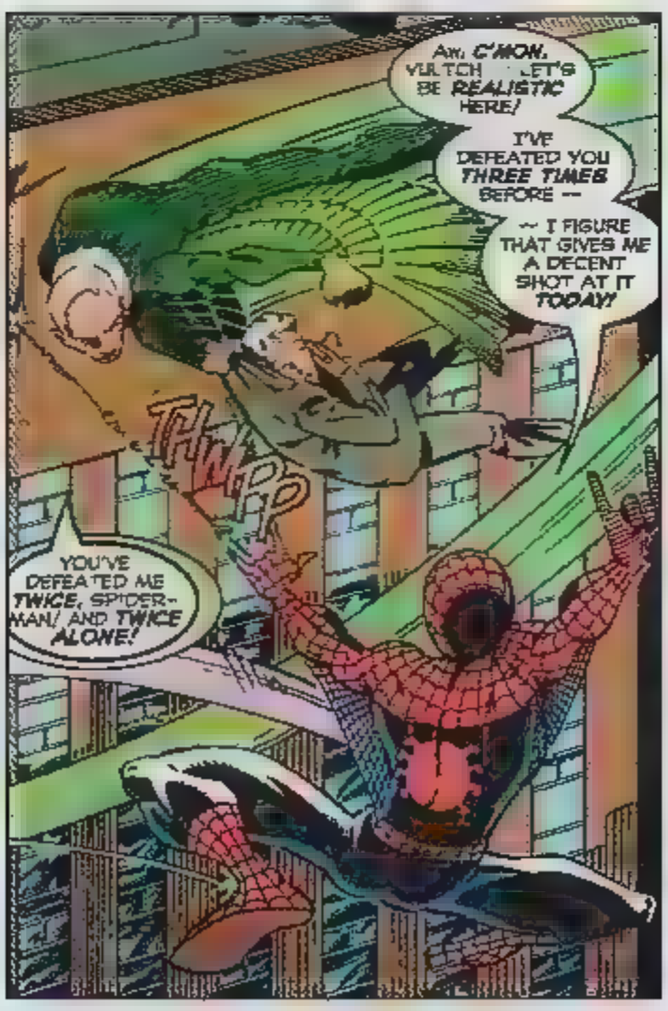
Busiek has certainly done his homework for Spidey history freaks. He's established a very strong continuity in the book (a newspaper headline in the background of issue #15 states "Daredevil Captures Electro" which actually happened in an issue of *Daredevil* the same time the story took place), reminding you that Spider-Man existed alongside the rest of the Marvel Universe during his early days.

The Bad: Even though the homework is done on this book, it is forgotten that most readers haven't. When pointing out storylines that have happened in past issues of *Amazing Spider-Man* (like the flashback of Spidey getting unmasked by Doc Ock in *Untold Tales* #15, which happened in *Amazing* #12), an editor's note stating the exact issue is necessary—otherwise, readers might feel left out. (It would also be nice to see a continuity note at the beginning of each issue telling you where each ish of *Untold Tales* fits in with the early *Amazing Spider-Man* issues.)

And finally, the book is ultimately flawed in concept, because you know nothing of huge consequence to Spider-Man can ever happen. You lose some excitement when you know Spidey will go practically unscathed through every adventure.

The Buzz: Unfortunately, there's not enough buzz on this book. The fact that this awesome book, starring Marvel's flagship character, barely crawls into the Top 100 each month baffles us.

The Skinny: If you're a Spider-Man fan, you will love this comic. There should be more comics on the racks like *Untold Tales*. With clear storytelling, excellent characterization and great dialogue, you really care about Spidey—and that ultimately overrides the fact that you know he's gonna live at the end of every story.



(At left) *Busiek captures the fun essence of Spider-Man perfect for true Spidey fans*

(At right) *Poor Peter never seems to win as his girlfriend Betty Brant walks into an unexpected scene*

The Verdict: 5

KANE

This crime book is not as simple as it looks

Genre: Crime/drama
Publisher: Dancing Elephant Press
Creative Team: Paul Grist
Price/Frequency: $3.50/Bimonthly

What You Need to Know: New Eden police detective Kane has recently rejoined the force with a new partner after being suspended for killing his former partner Dennis Harvey, who had ties to crime lord Oscar Darke.

The Good: Though *Kane* is deceptively simple in appearance, the book is far from it, having smart stories, layered characters and sharp dialogue. There are two main stories unfolding, each interesting in and of itself. One story, told in flashback, depicts the rise and fall of supercop Dennis Harvey and how Kane dealt with it. And there is the current story of how Kane attempts to take Oscar Darke down, all while trying to vindicate himself to a police squad that treats him like a traitor.

Paul Grist gives each of the main characters their own identity. Oscar Darke is a great Godfather-esque boss who isn't as untouchable as you might think. Kane's new partner, Kate Felix, is walking a tightrope as Kane's friend and as a watchdog for the precinct's captain. Jim Lovett, Harvey's detective friend who despises Kane with a passion, is forced to work on a case with him. Even ridiculous characters (like Floppsie Whoppsie, the luckless thief in the bunny costume) are a hoot to read. The dialogue alone keeps you reading. It's daring and innovative. The conversations between Kane and Oscar Darke always have a subdued intensity.

And Grist takes chances with his storytelling. His use of flashbacks to create irony in the present makes for an interesting story. Every panel of issue #13 has the same point of view: peering from the back seat of a roaming squad car. Issue #5 was completely without dialogue, and was carried instead on sound effects.

The Bad: While the flashbacks make for an interesting storytelling technique, their execution is sometimes confusing. With the simple black-and-white art style, it's difficult to distinguish flashbacks from the present; the only way to tell is to see how long Kane's hair is—short hair means flashback, long means the present. For such an important part of the story, it makes the story difficult to dive into.

Darke's mumbled phonetic dialogue, while humorous to read, is also difficult to decipher. You end up spending a minute per word balloon trying to figure out what he's saying. (Helpful hint: Say it aloud doing your best Marlon Brando impression and listen to what you're saying.)

The simplicity of the art also takes some getting used to. It doesn't get in the way of the story, but sometimes background characters look alike and the backgrounds get overly simple.

The Buzz: *Kane*'s irregular shipping woes are over, according to Grist. There will be back-to-back issues in February and March, and then it'll be back on bimonthly track.

The Skinny: Storytelling problems like the flashback confusion keep you at arms length from these great characters and dialogue. This book deserves a 5, but there're too many times you have to fight to get to the good points.

(At left) *Note the wry humor in the dialogue from this scene where Kane talks to his captain*

(At right) *Oscar Darke's dialogue, while humorous, is difficult to get through (but saying it aloud imitating Marlon Brando helps)*

The Verdict: 4

Wizard and DC Comics bring you:

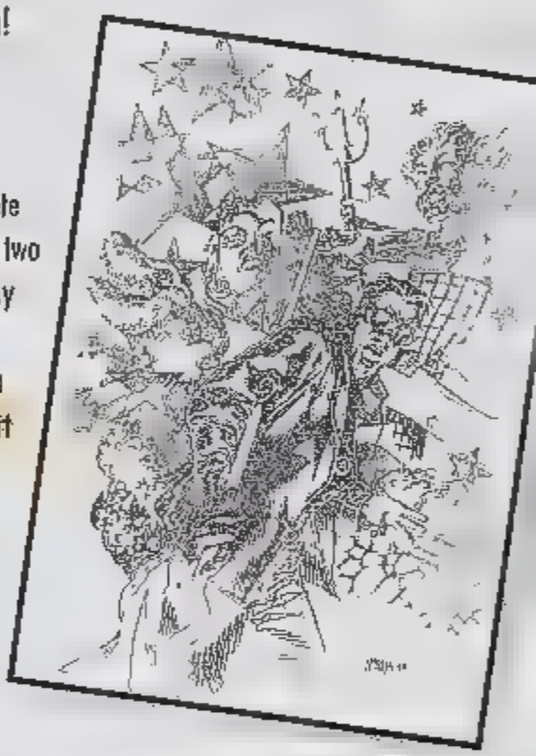
The Starman Contest

Wizard: GTC #67

It's Starman Month at DC Comics, a 30-day celebration of the critically acclaimed superhero story brought to you every month by writer James Robinson and artists Tony Harris and Wade Von Grawbadger. Right now, *Starman* #29, a 32-page book with no interior ads that provides the perfect jumping-on point for new readers, is hitting the shelves. And if you give it a read and find out what's going on, you just might be able to walk off with a load of Starman swag!

Oh, Yeah? Like How?

Just like you, Jack Knight, the alter-ego of DC Comics' Starman, is a collector. He's a collector who sells some of his acquisitions in his "Knight's Past" collectibles store. But the store could use a little renovation. So send in a drawing for what you think the exterior of "Knight's Past" should look like. Best entries win!



Prizes

Grand Prize (1): One reader will receive a complete DC Comics Starman retail products package (see this month's "Junk Drawer"), including two trade paperbacks (*Night and Day* and *Sins of the Father*), a Starman poster, an incredibly cool Starman zodiac watch, Starman T-shirt, Starman Henley shirt and Starman badge!

As if this outfitting wasn't complete enough, the Grand Prize winner will also receive a copy of the ol' origin-recapping *Starman #0*, this piece of Tony Harris *Starman* original art and an original, autographed and sketched James Robinson *Starman* script!

Second Prize (20): Twenty readers will receive a copy of *Starman #0*, the new *Starman #29* and the *Starman: Night and Day* trade paperback.

Special thanks to the starry-eyed fellas at DC Comics, and Tony, Wade and James, who provided this loot!

Fill this sucker out, put it in an envelope and send it to: Starman Contest, c/o Wizard Press, P.O. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118.
Deadline is March 31, 1997.

Legal Stargazing

No purchase necessary. Contest is open to anyone except employees of Wizard Press, DC Comics, their immediate families or everybody who shot Sue crappy John Carpenter "Starman" flick. But, all others should come Starman flash one-time up stuff. Print your name, date of birth, address, city, state, zip and telephone number with area code on the official entry form or a 3-by-5-inch index card and attach to your entry. Enter as many times as you like. Mail each entry separately to: Starman Contest, c/o Wizard Press, P.O. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118. No mechanical reproductions of completed forms are accepted, but you can photocopy the entry form before filling it out if you don't want to mess up your magazine. All entries become property of Wizard Press and none will be returned. All taxes (federal, state and local, if any) will be the responsibility of the prize winners. No cash equivalent or substitute prizes will be offered. Prizes are awarded to the names of the contest winners and are not transferable. Offer void where prohibited, regulated or restricted by law in a manner inconsistent with the purposes and rules herein. So what did the Zen philosopher say, to the hot dog vendor? "Make me one with everything!" Ho! Geez, love that one. The Comics never go out of style. **All entries must be received at contest headquarters by March 31, 1997.** Wizard Press is not responsible for lost, late, misdirected or mutilated entries. Odds of winning will be determined by the number of valid entries received prior to the closing date of the contest. Prize winners will be selected based on quality and uniqueness from among all properly completed entries by Wizard Press. Judging will take place on April 15, 1997. TM, ®, and all related characters are TM & © DC Comics Inc.

For a list of winners, available after April 15, 1997, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to: Starman Winners, c/o Wizard Press, P.O. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118.

Starman Contest Entry Form

Name _____ Date of Birth _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Number (with area code) _____

Did you attach your entry?

PICKS

BEHOLD!

THEY'RE MAD, I TELL YOU!!

THE MUST-READ COMICS SHIPPING IN FEBRUARY

AQUAMAN #31

BATMAN: THE LONG HALLOWEEN #5

TITLES DENOTED WITH A **MR** CONTAIN MATERIAL THAT'S SUGGESTED FOR MATURE READERS.

AQUAMAN #31

DC COMICS The Shark, that cheeseball humanoid shark villain that used to slap around Green Lantern Hal Jordan, is back! And this time he's turned his attention to Aquaman. Now Aqua's gotta fight his way past his own fishy friends that have turned against him thanks to the Shark's telepathic control. That and Garth eats a McDonald's Fish Deluxe sammich and recognizes it as his old fish pal Dave. Mmmm... Dave. By Peter David, Roger Robinson and Ken Branch. **$1.75**

[illegible]

DC COMICS HEEEEYYY! DC's still planning on cancelling *Aztek*, so if you dig this legitimately cool book and wanna try and save it, send your pleas to: SAVE AZTEK, DC Comics, 1700 Broadway, New York, NY 10019. C'mon, this book kicks ass. Get off your butt and help save it! Anyhoo: In this ish, Aztek heads off to Metropolis in search of Supes and instead finds the Parasite, who decides to kick the completely inexperienced hero's ass. Should be neat. By Grant Morrison, Mark Millar, N. Steven Harris and Keith Champagne. **$1.75**

BATMAN AND ROBIN ADVENTURES #17

DC COMICS In the wake of the Mad Hatter's death, strange goings on begin to plague Alice Pleasance, the woman the Hatter was obsessed with in life. Can our boy Batman (and his boy Robin) get to the bottom of the hauntings before...waitaminnit. It just hit us—the Mad Hatter is dead. Geez-Louise, it's about freakin' time. We never understood how that character escaped being wiped from existence during "Crisis" or "Zero Hour." Good riddance. By Paul Dini, Ty Templeton, Joe Staton and Rick Burchett. **$1.75**

BATMAN: THE LONG HALLOWEEN #5 (OF 13)

DC COMICS Since Batman just can't figure out who the serial killer Holiday is, he decides to have some fun. So he pantses Alfred and locks him in a room with a hormonally berserk Aunt Harriet. No wait, that's the plot for next month's *Batman & Robin Adventures*. This ish sees Bats go out on the town with Catwoman, only to have Poison Ivy step in and try to steal Bruce away. Meanwhile... Harvey Dent and the Commish take a trip to Wayne Manor to question Bruce Wayne about the murders in Gotham. By Jeph Loeb and Tim Sale. **$2.95**

[illegible] OF PRIDE: REVOLUTION

DC COMICS With Oracle as her guide, Black Canary tracks down a slave ring, which leads her to the island nation of Santa Prisca. There, she discovers that a military coup is planned to take over the island. And being one of the good guys, Canary's gotta stop it. You can bet there's gonna be lots of guns blazing and exploding kittens. By Chuck Dixon, Stefano Raffaele and Bob McLeod. **$2.95**

BLACK LAMB #6

THE FLASH #124

GREEN LANTERN #85

HITMAN #13

BLACK LAMB #6 (OF 6)

HELIX/DC Instead of "Black Lamb," let's go with "Sacrificial Lamb," 'cause it's him vs. Vlad the Impaler, and the Lamb tries to put the big kibosh on Vlad's plans of human sacrifice and world domination. Hey, as long as he's sacrificing the right humans (read: O.J.), we don't got a prob em with that. By Timothy Truman, who says, "We get to see the showdown between [Black Lamb] and Vlad Tepes [Dracula] and the Blood Countess, who is an actual h storical figure. She was a 16th century countess who kil ed 600 ma dens and drained the r blood. I m playing Vlad as much of a historical figure as a mytho ogical vampire creature; I m using a lot of the actual Vlad history. *Black Lamb* is the thing 've had the most fun doing and , just want to say thanks to the fans for supporting this work. DC has been talk ng to me about extend ng the [*Black Lamb*] adventure." **$2.50**

BRAINBANX #2 (OF 6)

HELIX/DC While checking out ORC's involvement in growing human brains in animals, Anna Elys an (the investigator whose telepathic ab ity a lows someone else to share her mind), gets busted by the company's telepath and, as she attempts to escape, finds herself trapped n an alien wilderness. By Elaine Lee and Temuj n. **$2.50**

DAREDEVIL #363

MARVEL Matt Murdock's life is getting pretty rocky. First off, his boss Razor Sharpe is trying to push Foggy into a relationship with Karen Page. Matt's woman! (Oooo. Matt's gonna kick Foggy's fat ass!) And while that's going on, Matt (as Daredevil), is out trying to save the city from the sleepless vi lainess Insomnia. By Karl Kesel, Gene Colan and Cam Sm th. Kesel says, "In this issue, Razor takes very defin tive steps to put a monkey wrench in the relationship that Foggy and Liz Osborne have deve oped. This is also the first of a two-parter that will revea who is pulling the strings at WFSK. The big revelation wi l be next issue. The only other big twist is that the issue after this, [#364] is my last." Noooooo!!! Say it ain t so, Karl! *Sniff* **$1.95**

FLASH #124

DC COMICS While defending his new home city of Santa Marta, the Flash finds that he s no longer the fastest man alive... he's the slowest! Now Wally's gotta get to the bottom of what s cookin' before his new adopted city is reduced to rubble. By Mark Waid, Brian Augustyn, Paul Ryan and John Nyberg. **$1.75**

GEN[13] #17

IMAGE It's the return of Helmut, as that loser vil ain tackles Lynch, Burnout and Grunge wh le the babes take on Helmut's boss, Baby Luv. Luv's plans...to take over the world! Hey, buddy—this is com c books. Get in line. By Brandon Choi, J. Scott Campbe l and Alex Garner. **$2.50**

GENERATION X #[illegible]

MARVEL After Black Tom's attack, the Gen X kids are running for their lives. But where are they headed? Taco Bell? Toys R Us? Haseem's House of Zippered Leather Masks? Nope. The fi l darlings head off to Muir Island. Thing is, they only get halfway there. And remember, the name of the place is Muir *Island*. By Scott Lobdell and Chris Bachalo. **$1.95**

READ THIS BOOK!

ASTRO CITY (vol. 2) #7

IMAGE Maybe this alien invasion story looks like all the other invasions that have been cranked out ately. First we had that p otless "Independence Day" crap. Then the anc lary staff ridden scenes that bogged down "Star Trek: First Contact" and made that flick weak, the pointless, directionless, sloppy "Mars Attacks!" mess; and the super anti-climactic JLA #1-#4 invasion story. Here's hoping that the invasion story here (a follow-up of sorts to *Astro City* (vol. 1), #5's story) doesn't blow it. Its marauding aliens are on their way to Earth and it's up to Honor Guard to hold 'em off so kiss Earth good-bye. On a lighter note (maybe), you also get to hang w th Astro City's newest s dekick, Brian, as he tack es the truth about his mentor, the Confessor. By Kurt Busiek, Brent Anderson and Will Blyberg. Busiek says, "There s an out-and-out battle between an a ien sh p and the heroes of Honor Guard and there's a rift developing between the heroes and the city government that we see break open over this. This is kind of like the storm that is raging around our lead character for this particular arc, Brian, the sidekick for the Confessor. Brian is learning more than he ever imagined about the Confessor's secrets. A few months ago he was an outsider to the world of superheroes—and now he's an insider, and this s not what he thought it would be like. It s far more complicated, far more treacherous and far more dangerous." **$2.50**

DC COMICS Why it sucks to be Green Lantern: 1) Your power battery was stolen; 2) You've just used up the last of your power fighting off the world's inhabitants; 3) The chick who stole the battery, the warrior-woman Fatality, is set to kick your now-powerless, "I'm just regular Kyle Rayner" ass. By Ron Marz, Darryl Banks and Romeo Tanghal. Marz says, "It's the first issue we've presented where Kyle doesn't have the ring because it's run out of energy and Fatality has stolen the battery. In a lot of ways it's not a Green Lantern story, it's a Kyle story. He's got to come to grips with the situation *without* depending on the ring." **$1.75**

ANTARCTIC PRESS This book really rocks! It's a slice-of-life tale about a bunch of college-age friends, and it doesn't pull any punches. This issue kicks off the mega-epic "Snowblind," as it asks, what would possess Erica to kill herself? After nearly drowning, she's in the hospital recovering, but the questions surrounding her attempted suicide still hang in the air. It's time to do a little delving into her past and find out what kind of skeletons she's got hidden in her closet. By Martin Wagner. **MR $2.95**

DC COMICS "Zombie Night at the Gotham Aquarium," Part 1 (of 5). The military's developed a toxin that can bring soldiers back to life. Of course, they come back as flesh-eating zombies, but that's besides the point. You see, the toxin's been stolen and Hitman's been hired to get it back. He tracks it to the Gotham aquarium, where the nutcase who stole it dumps it in the water. Now Hitman's gotta fight his way through zombie animals to get the toxin. By Garth "I'm gonna shoot me some zombie-walruses" Ennis and John "I just want to see a zombie-squid" McCrea. **$2.25**

JLA #4

LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES #91

DC COMICS Impulse's mom somehow makes the jump back through time to the present to find her son. Bet ya didn't expect to see her. But a few questions arise. How'd she get here? What's she want? Will Impulse dump Max Mercury to return home with mommy? Is anybody else sick of time-travel stories in Flash books? By Mark Waid, Humberto Ramos and Wayne Faucher. **$1.75**

DC COMICS Hey, here's that *JLA* ish we ragged on back in the *Astro City* write-up. Y'see, this is the big wrap-up to the first *JLA* story arc and while it's entertaining, it's a bit of a let-down. Ah, but it's still better than 95% of the other comics out there. This ish: the grand finale of the Martian invasion as the JLA turns to an unlikely source to help kick some alien tail. By Grant Morrison, Howard Porter and John Dell. **$1.95**

DANCING ELEPHANT PRESS Sgt. Max Anderson's day starts off well, but it goes downhill very, very quickly when some nut climbs up to the rooftops and starts taking shots at the people down below. And then there's the phone, which keeps on ringing, 'cause some other nut keeps calling Max. Damn tele-marketers. By Paul Grist. **$3.50**

DC COMICS [EDITOR'S NOTE: Unless you've mastered time travel, we suggest reading the *Legionnaires #47* write-up first for this to make sense.] After months and months of the Legionnaires being stranded in the 20th century trying to get back with the rest of the team in the 30th century, it finally happens...sort of. All their attempts get them trapped in the time stream, and to make matters worse, one of their members is in a coma, with only a little time left to live. It's gonna take a miracle (or maybe a

READ THIS BOOK!

UNKNOWN SOLDIER #1 (OF 4)

VERTIGO/DC COMICS Take a trip back to WW II and meet someone whose name you'll never know. The Unknown Soldier is the Army's bestest spy. He can infiltrate any camp and be anyone he wishes, and he can't be caught. But what does he do when the War's over? Easy: he keeps on doing what he does best, only this time it's his own agenda. By Garth Ennis and Kilian Plunkett. Ennis says, "I didn't really know anything about the character, except that he was this bloke who went around with bandages all over his face. But it did appeal to me. The Unknown Soldier is essentially a spy, an undercover agent and occasional assassin. He would make the kind of decision where you just have guys butchered so some other plan you're initiating will succeed—a completely cold, ruthless kind of an approach." **MR $2.50**

Flash) for things to work out. By Tom Peyer, Tom McCraw, Lee Moder and Ron Boyd. **$2.25**

LEGIONNAIRES ?

DC COMICS One of the Legionnaires is in a coma and needs to get back to the 30th century for some real medical treatment. So Brainiac 5 figures out a way to get them all back. The problem is, they've got a traitor in their midst and they (including the Legionnaires of the 30th century) end up getting stuck in the time stream! By Tom Peyer, Tom McCraw, Jeffrey Moy and W.C. Carani. **$2.25**

LORDS OF MIDNIGHT #2

DARK HORSE COMICS Jack returns to his old home village of Callow after a friend is murdered, a murder that was predicted by his institutionalized brother. There he's gonna have to revamp his thinking of the supernatural as he meets pilots from 1941 and knights from the Crusades. How eerie. By Dan Abnett, John Tomlinson, Steve White and Peter Snejbjerg. **MR $2.95**

MARS ATTACKS THE IMAGE UNIVERSE #3 (OF 4)

TOPPS Yep, the Martians are still trying to take over the Image Universe. This time they get to see just how Spawn, Witchblade, the WildC.A.T.s, Cyberforce and LabMan react to them. (LabMan?) It ain't gonna be pretty. But, hey, you also get to see a major U.S. city go up in smoke. By Keith Giffen, Andy Smith and Bill Sienkiewicz. **$2.50**

POISON ELVES ?

SIRIUS ENTERTAINMENT Huzzah! The Guild War is over! Shame about Vido's best bud who's now a corpse, and the fact that the secret is now out: The Sanctuary has—ah, *had* a secret guild of assassins. The only thing that could burn these guys out more is if they owned Marvel stock. By Drew Hayes. **$2.50**

POWER OF SHAZAM! ?

DC COMICS Kid is Play, and Play is Kid, and *everything's* mixed up. Crazy things are happening in Fawcett City. Dr. Sivana is the mayor, C.C. Batson (Billy's father) is Captain Marvel and something's wrong with the power of Shazam! (Maybe he should say "Shazam!" backwards. Hey, it worked in that old He-Man cartoon.

LORDS OF MIDNIGHT #2

MARS ATTACKS THE IMAGE UNIVERSE #3

PAPERBACK PICKS

Trade Paperbacks You Won't Wanna Miss

Starman: Night and Day (DC) ▼

Starman fans, and wannabe Starman fans, should definitely check out this trade paperback which compiles issues #7-#10 and #12-#16 of the regular *Starman* series. While Jack Knight has to figure out just what being Starman means, he also gets into some of his first major battles with Solomon Grundy and Nash (who later becomes the new Mist). And he even meets a blue alien who once held the Starman name. By James Robinson, Tony Harris, Wade Von Grawbadger and more. **$12.95**

The Books of Magic: Reckonings (DC)

Collected here are issues #14-#20 of *The Books of Magic*, some excellent adventures of our young friend Tim Hunter. These issues drop Tim into Hell as he tries to rescue his friends from his future self. And while Tim's doing what he can, his friends are stuck in a land of evil fairy tales and forced into roles a demon has created for them. By John Ney Rieber, Peter Gross, Peter Snejbjerg and John Ridgway. **$12.95**

Programmed for Damage—Scud: The Disposable Assassin #5-#9 (Fireman Press)

This trade paperback collects issues #5-#9 of *Scud* in one volume, where you'll meet Voodoo Ben Franklin (who wants to kill Scud), get to check out Scud's "loaner" arm (which happened to belong to a werewolf), and get to meet Scud's companion, Drywall, in his first appearance. It's zany fun by Rob Schrab, Mondy Carter, and Dan Harmon. **$14.95**

Greyskull of power the by!") By Jerry Ordway, Peter Krause and Mike Manley. **$1.75**

MUMBLEBEE ?

VERTIGO/DC In the climax to "Crusaders," Jesse's stuck in Masada. But he's got that Word-of-God thing going for him (where everyone must obey his commands): so when the Grail's trap is sprung, he's ready. Allfather D'Aronique and the crazy kid get what's coming to 'em. Star does something totally unexpected, and Jesse's gotta figure out a way to save Cassidy. You better believe this title's more fun than a barrel o' monkeys. (And remember, monkeys are lots of fun!) By Garth Ennis and Steve Dillon. **MR $2.50**

ROBIN ?

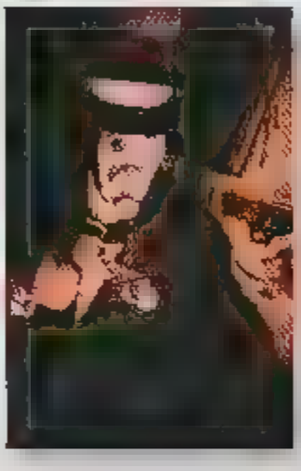
DC COMICS While Robin takes the night off to help Ariana through a particularly rough time in her life, the Spoiler goes up

against the Oriental underground gang, The Ghost Dragons. She's trying to stop them from spreading their masses out from Gotham City's Chinatown and into the suburbs. Thing is, she's usually teamed with Robin, who's always getting her out of jams and covering her back, and this time she's alone. By Chuck Dixon, Staz Johnson and Bob Smith. **$1.95**

SANDMAN MYSTERY THEATRE #49

DC COMICS "The Scarlet Ghost," Part 1 (of 4). Even if your book sucks, people usually don't try to kill you. So why is someone trying to knock off a pulp fiction writer? After finding out that a publisher has become a target, Wesley Dodds (a.k.a. Sandman) gets on the case. Just hope he doesn't get nabbed by the Gimp from the other "Pulp Fiction." By Matt Wagner, Steven T. Seagle and Guy Davis. **MR $2.50**

POWER OF SHAZAM! #25



SANDMAN MYSTERY THEATRE #49

SPECTRE #52

DC COMICS Nate Kane, Jim Corrigan's human friend and partner, is checking out some old files and comes across some interesting information. Fifty years ago, Jim Corrigan (The Spectre) was implicated in a murder ...and every piece of evidence says that he's guilty! It'll be interesting to see how the spirit of vengeance handles this one. Plus, Spectre goes to visit some of his old pals in the Justice Society of America. By John Ostrander and Tom Mandrake. **$2.50**

STRANGERS IN PARADISE (VOL. 2) #4

IMAGE Francine's pretty happy with her new job, but that soon changes when she takes a stroll through the atrium and discovers a nude statue... of herself! Well, at least the guys in the office won't have to wonder what she looks like nekkid. And Katchoo's little chat with her neighbors leads to a startling discovery. By Terry Moore. **$2.75**

UNTOLD TALES OF SPIDER-MAN #20

MARVEL Jason Ionello still blames himself for the death of Sally Avril (a.k.a. Bluebird) and figures it might be best for everyone if he's dead too. But when he ends up in the middle of a battle between Spidey and the Vulture, can these two somehow make him realize that suicide isn't the right course of action? By Kurt Busiek, Pat Olliffe and A. Williamson. **99 CENTS** W

AT A GLANCE

A LISTING OF THE HIGH-PROFILE BOOKS SHIPPING IN FEBRUARY

Batman #541 (DC)
Batman and the Spectre team up to find a murderer who's running loose in Gotham. **$1.95**

Captain America #6 (Marvel)
Somehow Cable makes his way into the "Heroes Reborn" Universe and teams up with Cap. **$1.95**

The Darkness #3 (Image)
Jackie's trying to figure out what he can do to get rid of the Darkness power. **$2.50**

Detective Comics #708 (DC)
Batman's gotta defend Gotham from the assassins Deathstroke and Gunhawk. **$1.95**

DV8 #5 (Image)
While trying to steal a top secret teleporter, Copycat is accidentally teleported into a strange, never-ending white room. **$2.50**

Fantastic Four #6 (Marvel)
The Avengers go through a strange transformation, and the cause of it seems to be... the Fantastic Four. **$1.95**

Gen[13] Bootleg #4 (Image)
The team tries to figure out why everyone seems to be after some kid named Voodoo. **$2.50**

Iron Man #6 (Marvel)
Could Iron Man be the newest Avenger or will he cause the team to break apart? **$1.95**

Lady Death: The Crotile #3 (of 6) (Chaos!)
Lady Death travels to Valhalla to gather an army of undead warriors. **$2.95**

Spawn #59 (Image)
The violator's after Cyan and Wanda, which makes Spawn forget about catching Jason Wynn. **$1.95**

Spider-Man Books (Marvel)
In *Sensational Spider-Man #15* ($1.95) Spidey and Ka-Zar fight Raxxon for the Savage Land. *Amazing Spider-Man #422* ($1.95) brings the Shocker and Black Tarantula back into Web-Head's life. In *Peter Parker: Spider-Man #79* ($1.95), Spidey tries to figure out HYDRA's plans for organized crime. And in *Spectacular Spider-Man #245* ($1.95), Spidey and the Chameleon go toe to toe.

Star Wars Books (Dark Horse)
Tales of the Jedi—The Golden Age of the Sith #5 ($2.95) shows us just what kind of trouble Gav and Jori Daragon get into while mapping hyperspace. *X-Wing Rogue Squadron—The Warrior Princess #4* ($2.95) sees a mysterious man, claiming to be a member of the royal family, make a bid for the throne of Eiolla.

Superman Books (DC)
Superman: The Man of Steel #66 ($1.95) reveals just what Supes means to the people of Metropolis. In *Superman #122* ($1.95) find out how and why one of the members of the battle city of Kandor fell. *Adventures of Superman #545* ($1.95) brings the Atomic Skull back into Supes' life. And *Action Comics #732* ($1.95) shows us the ongoing battle between Supes and the Atomic Skull.

Thunderbolts #1 (Marvel)
Find out just who has risen up to take the place of the Avengers and the Fantastic Four. **$2.99**

Uncanny X-Men #343 (Marvel)
The X-Men could be the last hope for the Shi'Ar Empire against the evil forces of the Juggernaut and the Phalanx. **$1.95**

WildC.A.T.s/X-Men #1 (Image)
Way back in WWII, Wolverine and Zealot have to team up to fight the Nazis. (Yeah, we remember that too.) **$4.50**

Witchblade #12 (Image)
Sara Pezzini (a.k.a. Witchblade) finally gets a lead on the Microwave Murderer and finds out some startling info on the supposedly dead Kenneth Irons. **$2.50**

Wolverine #112 (Marvel)
Wolvie moves into New York City and finds a new enemy. **$1.95**

X-Files #27 (Topps)
Mulder is captured by terrorists who are trying to get an alien ship out of the U.S. **$2.95**

X-Man #26 (Marvel)
Nate's powers are killing him. Will his trip to Muir Isle be his salvation or destruction? **$1.95**

X-Men #63 (Marvel)
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Where's your photo? Is it attached? Better be!

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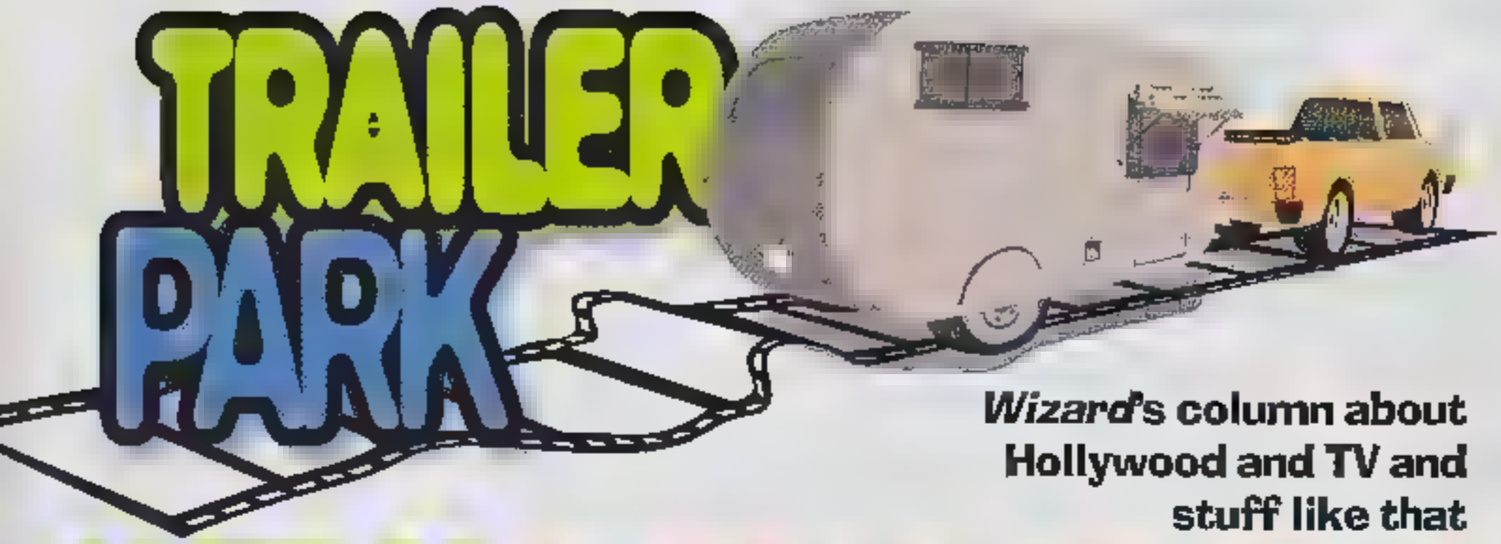

***Wizard*'s column about Hollywood and TV and stuff like that**

X-FILM HEADED IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

By Rob Allstetter

The long-awaited **"X-Men"** live-action movie from 20th Century Fox finally has a director, thanks to one of several important moves Marvel is making on the live-action movie front.

Sources have confirmed that **Bryan Singer** will be directing "X-Men." Upon completion of his current project, an adaptation of the Stephen King novella "Apt Pupil," Singer will oversee the finishing of the X script.

Singer's credits include "The Usual Suspects" and "Public Access," which shared the Grand Jury prize at the Sundance Film Festival in 1993.

"We're taking the subject matter very seriously," Singer told *Daily Variety*. "This will not be a comic-book style film, for the X-Men are an ensemble of antiheroes, and we've figured out a way to make the story accessible to fans and non-fans alike. The story deals with the origins of the characters, but it's not completely based on the first comic book."

In other Marvel film news:

• The first movie from the newly formed Marvel Studios will be **"Captain America."** Leslie Bohem, whose credits include "Daylight" and the upcoming "Dante's Peak," will be writing "Captain America" with Larry Wilson, who was one of the writers on "The Addams Family" and "Beetlejuice." It's a pairing of a classic action writer with a quirky character writer.

Cloud Nine Entertainment will be the production company, with Mark Gordon and Gary Levinsohn producing. They also produced "Broken Arrow," "Speed" and the upcoming "Flood."

• Joe Johnston, the director of "Jumanji," "The Rocketeer," and "Honey, Shrunk the Kids," has signed a developmental deal for **"The Incredible Hulk,"** which is being produced by Gale Anne Hurd for Universal.

Mike France, who wrote "Cliffhanger" and "Goldeneye," as well as the script for the upcoming **"The Fantastic Four,"** will be writing a new "Hulk" script. Jonathan Hensleigh, whose credits include "The Rock," "Die Hard with a Vengeance" and "Jumanji," is being brought on as a creative producer.

• An **"Iron Man"** movie is being written by Jeff Vintar for Fox, and, according to *The Hollywood Reporter*, **Nicolas Cage**, who won the Academy Award last spring for "Leaving Las Vegas" and starred in last summer's hit, "The Rock," is interested in playing Tony Stark and Iron Man. Cage is a big comic-book fan and took his stage name from the Marvel character Luke Cage.

X-fans, don't fret yet. The **"X-Men"** animated series is going into syndication next fall. Saban Entertainment, which produces the Fox series, is selling 52 episodes of "X-Men," and Morel," a one-hour series that will include half-hour reruns of "X-Men." The other half of the show is being called the "Marvel Super-Heroes Checkerboard," and will include 26 rerun episodes each of "Fantastic Four" and "Iron Man."

Sources say it is unclear if "X-Men," now out of production after 75 episodes, will remain on Fox next fall. It's likely some X-franchise will be on Fox for the 1998-99 season.

Word is expected soon on whether UPN will renew "The Incredible Hulk" for a second season. If that happens, Marvel will have six animated series for the 1997-98 television season: "X-Men," "Spider-Man," "The Incredible Hulk," "Silver Surfer," "Iron Man" and "Fantastic Four."

Who's better—Michael Jordan or Shaquille O'Neal? Well, with his MVPs, scoring titles and NBA championships, you'd have to give the edge to Jordan.

But that's as a basketball player. How about as an actor?

"I saw 'Space Jam' [Jordan's first film] the other day, and I'd have to say, I like my basketball player better," laughed **Kenneth Johnson**, the writer and director of O'Neal's next film, **"Steel,"** which is based on the DC Comics character.

Johnson was in an editing room on the Warner Bros. lot in Burbank, Calif., continuing post-production on the film, which wrapped principal photography in mid-October. He plans on finishing "Steel" by early March for a release in August.

O'Neal fit the 51-day shoot in between his Dream Team time in the Summer Olympics in Atlanta and the start of training camp with his new NBA team, the Los Angeles Lakers.

"That's part of the reason the picture got made so fast," said Johnson, who wrote the story for "Steel" in three weeks and completed the script in another two. "They only had Shaq for this narrow, narrow window."

O'Neal's John Henry Irons is pulled from the comics, but the other characters are all Johnson's creations. The story starts out with Irons in the army, testing a new weapon with Nathaniel (played by Judd Nelson) and Sparky (played by Annabeth Gish).

The test goes awry due to Nathaniel's impulsiveness, killing a senator and leaving Sparky in a wheelchair as a paraplegic. Dismissed from the army, Nathaniel tries to sell his weapons knowledge. He empowers gangs with the technology as pseudo-"infomercials" for prospective buyers.

It's up to Irons to stop him, and with the help of Sparky and Uncle Joe, he creates the Steel armor. Richard Roundtree, best known as Shaft, plays Uncle Joe, a junkyard sculptor who serves as a mentor to Irons. "Sort of his Obi-Wan Kenobi or Yoda," Johnson said.

The film has some 215 special visual effects, many of which involve the weapons Nathaniel is trying to sell.

Johnson, who has turned down numerous comic-book projects since creating "The Incredible Hulk" television series in 1977, was wary of O'Neal looking silly in the armor. Johnson removed the cape and exposed O'Neal's eyes and the lower part of his face.

The armor has a deliberate lower-tech look, sort of a RoboCop meets the Tin Man.

And all of O'Neal's scenes as Steel were filmed at night. "It's a little easier to believe

at night," Johnson said. "A 7-foot-3 guy walking the street in a suit of armor in broad daylight? I don't think so."

The music for the film will be done by Mervyn Warren, a protégé of executive producer Quincy Jones.

"I want a score much like the 'Back to the Future' score that's big, full, symphonic and heroic," Johnson said. "I want it to have a heroic, Superman kind of feel to it. At the same time, Mervyn and I are going to strive to put in some real hip-hop street rhythms, so that there's a sense of Earth in it, too. Additionally, there's going to be a lot of source music in the picture where we use contemporary, hot recordings."

People who find the music interesting will be able to purchase a "Steel" soundtrack album. Plans also include a line of action figures from Kenner and promotional tie-ins with Pepsi and Reebok. Warner Bros. hopes to make a franchise of "Steel," and the principal performers are all contracted for a sequel.

Jamie Lee Curtis has signed to play the lead role in **"Virus,"** the Universal Pictures live-action film based on the Dark Horse comic book series. The film, to be directed by visual effects wizard John Bruno, is set to go before the cameras on Jan. 24 in North Carolina.

Curtis will play a member of an American tugboat crew who take refuge from a typhoon aboard a Russian research vessel that is being preyed upon by an alien.

Curtis' credits include "True Lies," "A Fish Called Wanda," and "Trading Places." She is also starring in the upcoming "Fierce Creatures," which reunites the "Wanda" cast.

John Hensleigh and Dennis Feldman wrote the screenplay, based on the original draft of "Virus" creator Chuck Pfarrer. The film's budget is expected to be at least $50 million, and it also stars Donald Sutherland and Billy Baldwin.

Crow fanatics, get ready to be fed again. A television series based on the 1994 movie **"The Crow"** and James O'Barr's comic book characters is in development for broadcast next fall. The series will be from the Edward R. Pressman Film Corp., Miramax and Buena Vista Television.

Thirteen hour-long episodes are planned, although it has not been determined yet if "The Crow" will be for network, syndication or cable television.

"The series will not be an anthology," said producer Jeff Most, who also produced the two Crow films. "It will be based on the first film and the Eric Draven character. We'll be developing the characters of the police officer, Sarah and Shelly. There will be some character additions, and some characters in the comic book that were not seen in the screen version."

Scripts are currently being worked on by "well-known writers," Most said. Casting will likely take place in the first quarter of 1997.

Most said he felt "The Crow" could play on broadcast television despite its mature themes, noting that the recent broadcast premiere of the original R-rated film had minimal cuts and drew substantial ratings in several markets. He also cited such recent successful series as "Millennium" and "The X-Files" as examples of how television is expanding.

The television series will not mean an end to the theatrical version of "The Crow." Most said an announcement is expected soon on a third Crow feature film, which would feature a new lead character. Meanwhile, the soundtrack to last August's "The Crow: City of Angels" recently went platinum (1,000,000 copies sold) and has been nominated for an American Music Award for top soundtrack. The awards will be presented on Jan. 27 on ABC.

Tommi Gunn is gunning for the big—or maybe little—screen. Everette Hartsoe, president of the cyborg heroine's company London Night Studios, said he has joined forces with longtime television producer Chris Bearde for a live-action "Tommi Gunn" film.

Heather Elizabeth Parkhurst, who stars in the Showtime series "Sherman Oaks," also produced by Bearde, will play the title role.

"She's funny, she's very down-to-earth and she's beautiful," Hartsoe said of Parkhurst, a former member of the Swedish Bikini Team. "She's really ready to get out there and pump up Tommi Gunn."

Hartsoe said it's unknown if the movie will be made for television or theatrical release. He added that he has started writing the first draft of the script.

"Tommi Gunn is going to be hunting down six androids who look like magazine models," Hartsoe said. "Apparently, something went wrong in their circuitry and they're out causing mayhem and destruction.

"[The movie] will have elements of campiness and lots of action. We're shooting for a '90s 'Barbarella.' "

Hartsoe said the film will likely be shot

in a studio in Shelby, N.C., which is about 30 minutes away from London Night's base in Hickory, N.C.

In other London Night news, Hartsoe said that the Razor movie project will now be pitched as a television series instead. "The reason being that it's difficult getting female-lead action movies made," Hartsoe said. "On television, they're already successful with 'Xena: Warrior Princess.'"

Hartsoe has been working with producer Jeff Most and the production company run by Renny Harlin and Geena Davis.

"We're developing it for the fall of '98," Most said. "It has a chance to make a lasting imprint on television and break some new ground."

"It will have a nice urban feel, with music being a big part of the show," Hartsoe said. "We'll have alternative and hip-hop. It doesn't matter too much if it's network or syndication. If it's syndication, there will be more action. If it's network, there will be more drama."

SHORT TAKES

Columbia TriStar has optioned James Hudnall's ***Espers*** comic book for television development. Tim Hunter, who has directed three feature films, including "The River's Edge" and "The Saint of Fort Washington," has signed to direct the pilot. *Espers*, which began in 1986 from Eclipse, will premiere as an Image Comics series in April. ...**"Invasion America"** is a new science-fiction animated series from Steven Spielberg, set to debut on the Warner Bros. Network in 1998. Voices will include **Leonard Nimoy**, Kristy McNichol and Edward Albert. ...Don't look for **"The Mask"** or **"Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles"** on CBS next fall. The network has announced it is pulling all of its animated series for educational and news programming. ...**Patrick Stewart**, who has played Jean-Luc Picard in "Star Trek: The Next Generation" and two post-series films, was recently awarded a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Stewart received his star in the live theater category. ...The Sci-Fi Channel has picked up 13 more episodes of **"The Anti-Gravity Room."** Producer Chris Greaves said new episodes are expected to air in February. ...**Anthony Hopkins** will star opposite **Antonio Banderas** in "The Mask of Zorro," which is set to begin filming on Jan. 27. Hopkins will play an older Zorro, who mentors the new one. Stuart Wilson will play Montero, the villain. The film will be directed by Martin Campbell, who directed the last James Bond film, "Goldeneye." ...Scott Goldberg, who has played an orderly on "Chicago

Hope," is playing Detective Sam Burke in the **"Spawn"** live-action movie. ...Sunbow Entertainment has optioned Slave Labor Graphics' ***Skeleton Key*** comic book series for development as a 26-part animated series. ...Fox has pulled **"The Tick"** off its Saturday morning schedule—at least temporarily. The series continues to air on Comedy Central. ...Struggling in the ratings, ABC's "Lois & Clark: The New Adventures of Superman," moved to Sunday night's 7 p.m. time slot on Jan. 5.

Rob Allstetter was going to present an American Music Award with RuPaul, but was replaced by Toni Basil.

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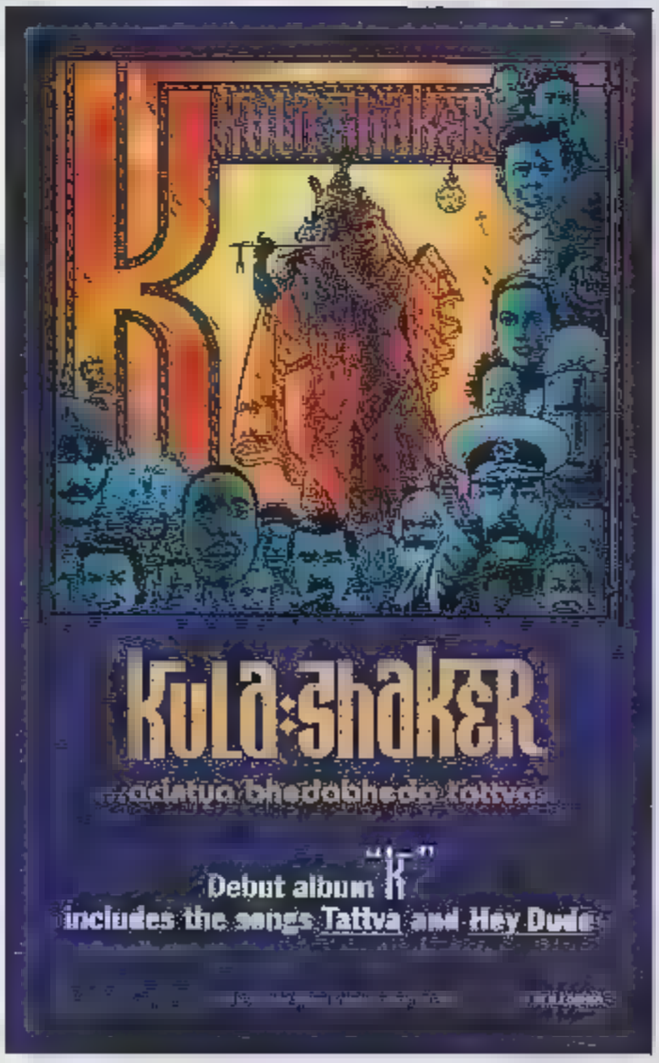
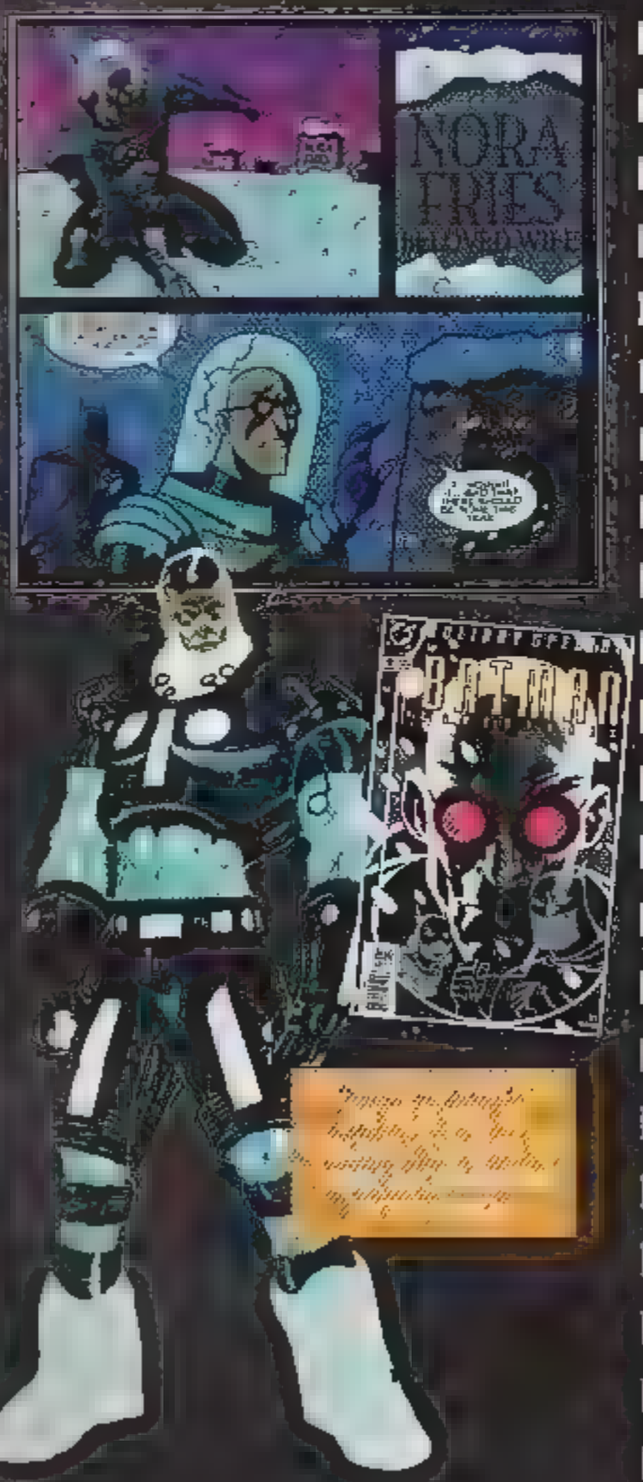


SPECIAL REPORT: TRAILER PARK

THE ICEMAN SPEAKETH

Arnold Schwarzenegger gives the scoop on "Batman & Robin"



With a star-studded cast in moviedom's most popular franchise, Arnold Schwarzenegger doesn't have to carry this summer's "Batman & Robin" like he does most of his films. But there remains a big burden on Schwarzenegger's shoulders, the armored costume he wears as Mr. Freeze.

The mostly metal, silver Mr. Freeze outfit is composed of 30 pieces and weighs nearly 50 pounds. The Iron Man-like duds contain 2,000 blue LED lights and are faithful to the current comics version.

"I have no hair—[I'm] bald," Schwarzenegger said during a Dec. 6 appearance on CNN's "Larry King Live." "He has to wear an armor that helps keep him 50 degrees below zero at all times. That's the only way he can go out and fight the battle."

The movie Mr. Freeze will be similar to the animated series version, putting his wife Nora (played by Vendela) into a cryogenic state in order to find a cure for the disease that is killing her.

"You will hate me, but you will understand where I am coming from," Schwarzenegger said. "The key thing about villains is that you give them the various different layers that are important."

Don't consider Schwarzenegger's performance altruistic, though.

"He has so much hatred towards the world—towards Batman and Robin and Batgirl and everyone else—that he tries to freeze the world," Schwarzenegger said. "He tries to take out Batman. I mean, the number of times I say, 'I'm going to kill Batman' because I hate him so much. How I'm going to tear Batman's heart out of his body and feel it freeze in my hands. The threats that I make and the chases and the battles. It's unbelievable."

Schwarzenegger has played his share of heroes and villains, including the Terminator, who was a villain in one film and a hero in the sequel.

"Villains are very interesting to play because you can do much more with the character," he noted. "When you play a hero, there are certain things you can't do. There are certain things that you have to do in order to appear heroic. As a villain, you don't have to do them. You can go all out with your performance and your acting. Dig in as deep as you can inside of yourself and bring out the most evil side there is. But, again, at the same time, it's important to be charming as a villain and to also let the people know why he is that. To bring all those layers and sub-layers into the character, which we have so many different opportunities through the movie to do."

Schwarzenegger credits director Joel Schumacher for helping him to delve into those layers of character.

"Joel Schumacher is a very, very talented director. He's like a psychologist [who] really can get to you and pull the performance out of you."

And what does Schwarzenegger think of the new Batman, played by George Clooney?

"He is an incredible actor. He's sensational," Arnold said. "It's really amazing how you can see, when someone performs in front of you, that they have that 'it'—[the] 'it' that makes them elevate themselves from the TV to the big screen. What he does on the big screen, how he lights up on the big screen, is really phenomenal. I think he is the best Batman we have had."

So is this an Arnold Schwarzenegger movie or a George Clooney movie?

"I think we are both starring in it," Schwarzenegger said. "Inevitably it is called 'Batman & Robin' and not 'Mr. Freeze.' But then again, by the time the movie comes out, maybe we will call it 'Mr. Freeze' [*laughs*].

"To be honest with you, I would really call it a Joel Schumacher epic. It's his movie. It's his creation. George Clooney will get the top billing, which he deserves—it's called 'Batman.' " ■ *RA*

THE LATEST BAT-BITS

Production continues through January and into February on "Batman & Robin." Here are some of the newest Bat-Facts.

- Tim Burton, who directed "Batman" and "Batman Returns" and executive-produced "Batman Forever," will not be involved in "Batman & Robin." Burton is still expressing interest in a "Catwoman" film, and script development continues.
- Elliot Goldenthal, who scored "Batman Forever," returns for "Batman & Robin." Barbara Ling is again production designer.
- Michael Gough is playing Alfred for the fourth time. He turned 80 during the production, and reportedly is as spry as ever.
- George Clooney's Batman will wear two different costumes; neither version will have yellow on it.
- Bane's face will be covered throughout the film with a headpiece similar to that of the comics. Bane is played by Jeep Swenson, known to many as the professional wrestler Jeep the Mercenary.
- Elle Macpherson's character is Julie Madison, the fiancée (yes, fiancée) of Bruce Wayne.
- Elizabeth Sanders, the wife of Batman creator Bob Kane, is reprising her "Batman Forever" role as Gossip Gerty. Her part will be larger than in the previous film. ■ *RA*

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MANGA SCENE

A GUIDE TO JAPANESE COMICS AND ANIMATION

By Carl Gustav Horn

MANGA MONSTER

Akira stands alone as one of the most famous color manga released in America

Katsuhiro Otomo thought it just wasn't going to work.

The year was 1988, and Otomo, the Japanese writer and artist of the best-selling manga *Akira* was in New York City to discuss an English version of his masterwork with Archie Goodwin, then Editor-in-Chief of Marvel Comics' Epic Comics division. But Otomo felt then that Americans just weren't ready on the mass market level for black-and-white comics like his, and Goodwin had been sending out test pages to American colorists such as Steve Oliff, who had just completed Howard Chaykin's *Blackhawk* for DC.

Oliff took one look at Otomo's intricate black-and-white tonework and realized that the traditional flat color of the comics would never work to adapt this, and a radical solution was required. Otomo was proved wrong by Oliff's solution, computer coloring, a brand-new technology that helped make *Akira* the most successful colorized manga to be released in America.

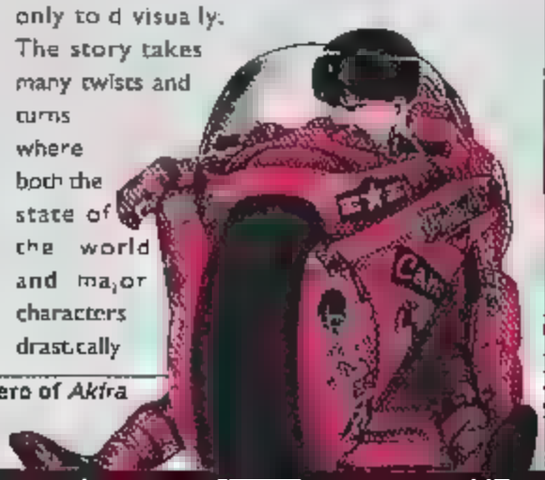
Of course, the story didn't hurt. Spanning from the seedy Tokyo underworld to the surface of the Moon, this 2,000-plus page tale can truly be deemed an epic.

On the surface, the basic plot behind *Akira* might seem a typical sci-fi/action plot, but underneath is a metaphor of an older generation's inability to contain the powerful spirit of youth.

Set in the year 2030, 38 years after World War II, the story surrounds a handful of runaway psychokinetic children and the factions that so desperately want them in their possession. These factions include the Japanese government which wants them contained, various religious cults who wish to "save" them, the U.S. army which wants to eliminate them, and a young group of teens that don't want them falling into the wrong hands. The prized possession of the psychokinetics the title character Akira, a silent 10-year-old with the power of a god, and yet impotent in that he appears mindless.

The story also offers commentary on various social issues. It depicts the horrors that science can create, how designer drugs can affect the mind, how the different perceptions of God can affect a population and how armies thrive on control. And control is at the heart of the story: who wants it... and who ultimately has it.

The impressive thing about *Akira* is that it is a true novel, only told visually. The story takes many twists and turns where both the state of the world and major characters drastically



Meet Kaneda, the biker punk hero of *Akira*

Otomo's detailed style on *Akira* revolutionized manga in Japan

a ter throughout the course of the story

Those who take the merest glance at *Akira* will realize that Otomo's intricately detailed artwork puts him in a superstar class of comic creators. Frederik L. Schodt, in his recent book *Dreamland Japan* which examines the manga industry, explains why *Akira* was such a burst of flame in Japan when its first volume was published there in 1984. He argues Otomo "created a revolution in clean-line realism in male manga in the early '80s and was one of the first [manga artists] to draw Japanese with more Asian-like features."

Otomo's innovative style was so radical that it had the power to make "red-blooded Japanese male adults" read a comic targeted for girls like Akira, Yoshida's *Banana Fish*, instead of drawing the flowers and glittering pupils usually found in girls' manga. Yoshida decided to use Otomo's realistic style. And as a side-note, Schodt notes in his book that Otomo was even able to make the late Osamu Tezuka a jealous man when Otomo's art style became more favored among the critics and the younger generation than his own. (Tezuka, an extremely competitive creator, was revered in Japan as the "god of manga" and practically created the manga industry after World War II.)

But besides Otomo's detailed art style and smart story, *Akira*'s success in America was solidified by Oliff's cutting-edge coloring. Oliff's challenge was to make manga art, mired in decades of black-and-white tradition, look good in color. This required an exacting technique that was simply never given to any other title.

Proof of its success lies in the fact that all other attempts to color manga before and since *Akira* were short-lived. Plus, none will spark conversation as much as *Akira* at comic book or manga conventions.

The software Oliff used, then called Kaleidoscope, is known as the Codd/Barrett system today. But this pioneer program, which had been developed only six months before Oliff began work on *Akira*,

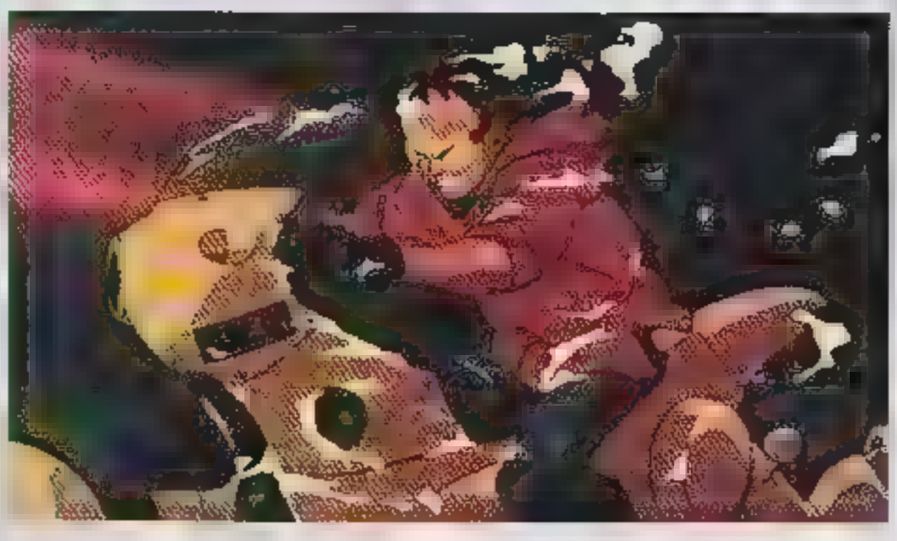
AKIRA: THE ANIME

As popular as the comic book version of *Akira* is, the animated "Akira" is equally recognized. Though the two have notable differences.

In a rare example, *Akira* creator Katsuhiro Otomo had complete control over its film version, by both writing and directing the anime as well. The basic approach he took to making his 2,000-plus page manga work in two hours and 10 minutes of anime was to give the film story a new, unifying mood where destruction and apocalypse seem always imminent.

In the manga, the mass of people in Neo-Tokyo are living normal lives while the underground movement skulks in the shadows and the biker gangs have their rumbles; in the movie, the populace is marching in the streets, white-shirted salaried men rioting side-by-side with student radicals. Military police think nothing of shooting through mall walkers to hit fleeing suspects.

Even the kindly Lady Miyako, who in the manga was a benevolent religious cult leader, has her personality flipped 180 degrees to suit the film's mood of urban terror: she becomes a rabble-rousing street preacher who, by the anime's end, is exhorting the citizens of Neo-Tokyo to walk into the flames. When mass destruction engulfs Neo-Tokyo in the manga, much of the city's population died while placidly watching TV and having breakfast; in the anime they seem ready, even eager, for destruction.



Even the manga's explanations about the history of the Akira Project and the nature of his psychic energy that got trimmed out of the movie seem, by their lack, to heighten the film's sense of chaos and doom.

And the powerful ending of the manga was shot differently in the anime. Otomo cut out most of the second half of the original manga story for the movie. But we recommend you read it and watch it to find out how different.

In his anime adaptation of *Akira*, Otomo managed to not only skillfully edit his story down for time considerations, but for effect as well. He distilled the comic into a movie as crazy and potent as raw liquor, and in the process simultaneously proved his genius in two related, yet very different media. ■ *Ch*

was extremely primitive. "It was a Mack truck—it couldn't do tricks," says Oliff. "But I learned how to make it sing."

Indeed he did. Oliff's coloring complemented Otomo's detail and duo-tone shading techniques. Oliff brilliantly knew when to stay light and when to go dark to let the artwork shine through.

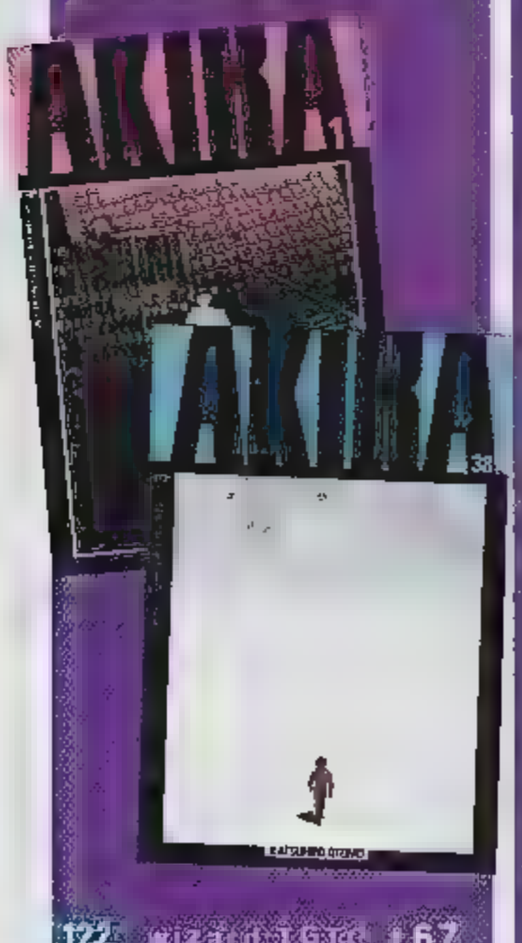
Oliff would go on to color many American comic book titles, including *Spawn* and *The Maxx*, but it was his work on *Akira* that gave manga a mainstream push and demonstrated the possibilities of computer-generated color for the entire comic book industry.

As to the power a book like *Akira* has, Oliff makes no bones about it. "You work on *Akira*," he says flatly, "and everything else is a step backwards." W

Carl Horn recently had himself computer colorized. No more fake-baking for him, baby!

F.Y.I.

[illegible]



MANGA SCENE

PICKS OF THE MONTH

SAILOR MOON

manga

(Mixx Zine, Inc., $4.95, b&w, 200+ pgs., bimonthly)

Just in is the announcement that a licensed, English-translated version of Naoko Takeuchi's original *Sailor Moon* manga will soon be available in the United States—one of four different manga titles (the other three to be announced shortly) which will be serialized in an upcoming American manga magazine, *Mixx Zine*.

Published by Ronald Scovil, Jr. (translator of Central Park Media's anime "The Tale of Genji") and Stuart Levy (of the multimedia firm Japan Online), *Mixx Zine*'s mass-market approach will give manga to Americans the exact same way the Japanese get it: "thick and cheap," in the words of Levy, with glossy color covers and newsprint interiors, as well as graphic-novel collections of the serialized stories later down the road.

The first issue of *Mixx Zine* will be on the stands in May but will be available in March with a special collectors' cover for readers who order a "VIP Subscription" (one year, $19.95) through their toll-free number 1-888-MIXX-NOW, a subscription that also includes a bonus of "Mixx Money" good towards merchandise. For more information, *MIXX*'s Web site is http://www.mixxonline.com.

Original material © 1994 Naoko Takeuchi and Kodansha Ltd. English-language © 1997 Mixx Publications LLC.

HERE IS GREENWOOD

anime

(Software Sculptors, subtitled or dubbed, 3 vols. of 60 mins ea., $24.95 ea., either version, now available)

Trapped in a dorm he never made! Visit Japan's weirdest college dorm, Greenwood, an unfenced asylum for prestigious Ryokuto Academy's freaks and loonies—and the hapless and normal Kazuya, who only wants to study hard and forget that his girlfriend just married his older brother instead. Two "Greenwood" episodes are on each volume. In Episode One of the first volume, "Thou Shalt Love Thy Daily Life," despite the school supposedly being all-male Kazuya immediately gets assigned by the scheming, pretty-boy seniors Mitsuru and Shinobu to room with a girl—or at least they all claim she's a girl!

In Episode Two, "Nagisa Hyper Rhapsody," Shinobu's psycho-sexy sister Nagisa moves into a luxury apartment across from Greenwood—with a scope-sighted rifle. Between her black-suited henchmen and her penchant for trying to seduce young girls, Nagisa intends to create hostage terror—although whether the terror is going to come more from Nagisa or her hostage's incessant demands for pastries and desserts remains to be seen.

Maybe Kazuya will forget his lost love—or maybe he'll just go stark raving mad!

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LOOKERS #1 COMMEMORATIVE
Check out this dynamic duo. You can't [illegible] Cool new cover by artist Rob Durham!

- Lookers #1 Commemorative - Limited to only 1000 copies. $5.
- Lookers #1 Com. Signed - Signed by Durham, William Christensen, & Mark Seifert. Limited to only 250 copies! $15

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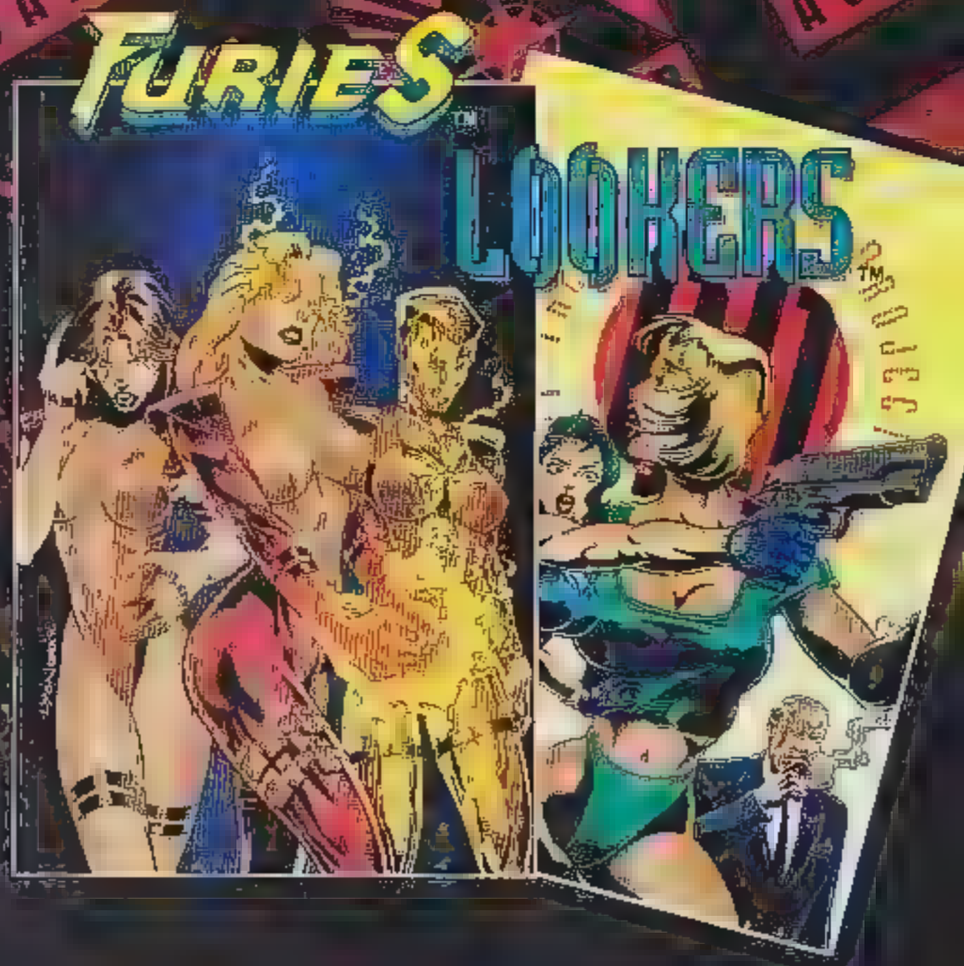


CHARACTER PROFILE:

Lady Death

BY MATTHEW BRADY

VITAL STATS

REAL NAME: Hope
AGE: 538 years old
HEIGHT: 6'
WEIGHT: never, ever ask a lady her weight, especially when her last name is Death
HAIR COLOR: white
EYE COLOR: white
FIRST APPEARANCE: *Evil Ernie #1* (Eternity, December, 1991)
TITLES CURRENTLY APPEARING IN: *Lady Death: The Crucible, Chaos! Quarterly*
MAJOR ENEMIES: Lucifer, Asteroth, Purgatori, Pagan, Matthias and Genocide

ORIGIN

In 1458, a girl known only as Hope was born of parents descended from both Heaven and Hell. Her mother was a good soul, while her father wanted to rule Hell. He was intent on gaining demonic powers and taking over Hell, and sacrificed many of the young men of his village in battle to appease the archdukes of Hell. Years later, the villagers realized what he was doing, killed him and then turned on Hope. While she hated her father's evil doings, she renounced her humanity and transported herself to Hell to escape death at the hands of the crowd.

Abandoned in the wilds of Hell, Hope learned that in this realm, desire equals power. She desired nothing more than the utter destruction of her father, who was now in Hell as well, and therefore had become very powerful.

During their battle, it was revealed that both Hope and her father were merely pawns of Lucifer, whose ultimate goal was to corrupt an innocent such as Hope. Infuriated by this revelation, Hope turned against Lucifer, ultimately defeating him. As Lucifer was apparently dying, he cursed her, telling her that as long as the living walk the Earth, she will never be able to return home. Hope, now calling herself Lady Death, accepted Lucifer's challenge, and turned Hell into the Endless Graveyard, the final resting place of the living. Her goal was simple: Kill all those who lived.

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING

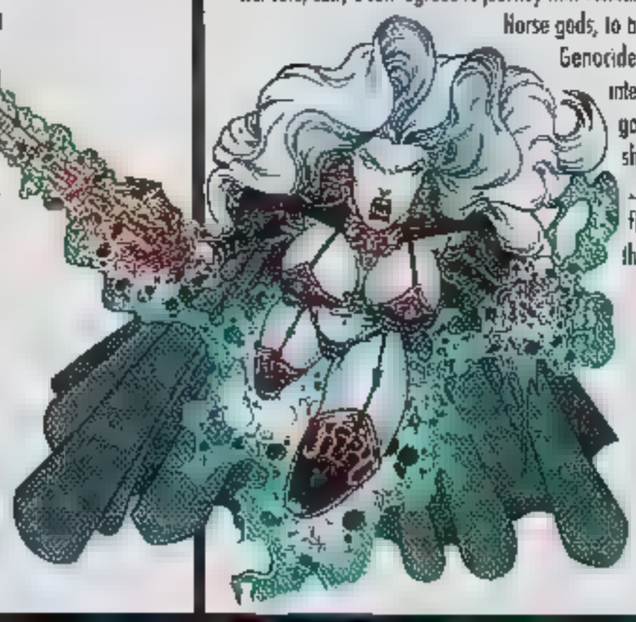
Lady Death ruled Hell for nearly 500 years, slowly working towards her goal of killing all those on Earth, so she could one day return to her home. Realizing that things were progressing too slowly, Lady Death enlisted the aid of Ernest Fairchild, a troubled teenager with latent psychic powers. Renaming himself Evil Ernie, he began a campaign of megadeath across the United States, filling the Endless Graveyard like never before.

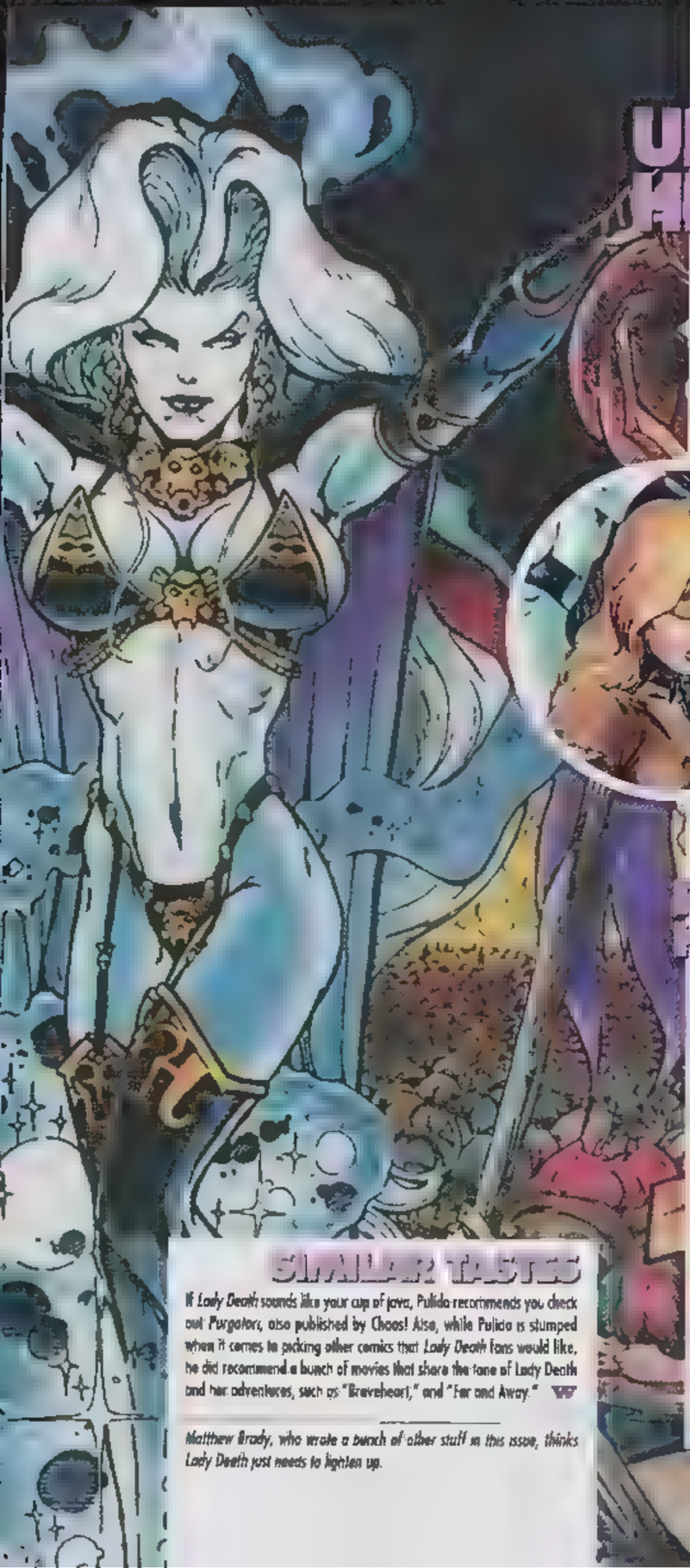
Meanwhile, in Hell, Lady Death's authority was challenged by Purgatori, Lucifer's former consort. Through Purgatori's hints, Lady Death realized that Lucifer was still alive, and still controlling Hell from behind the scenes. Tired of fighting against Purgatori and the other denizens of Hell, Lady Death submitted to Lucifer, changing her name and appearance to Lady Demon.

While journeying through Hell as Lady Demon, Hope came upon the spirit of her mother. Her mother, trapped in Hell by Purgatori, forced Hope to remember who she was and how Lucifer had manipulated her throughout the ages. Hope's mother gave Hope all of her own angelic energies, which allowed her to overcome Lucifer's influence. Fully recovered, Lady Death attacked Lucifer, and threw him through Heaven's Gate, where he was apparently destroyed.

Lucifer's death threw Hell into literal chaos. What was once a carefully maintained hierarchy disintegrated into tenuous allegiances and shifting treaties as the 13 archdukes of Hell tried to claim all of Hell as their own. Through the manipulations of one archduke, Lady Death was thrown into the Void, an area between all theologies.

In the Void, Lady Death was guided by Vandala, a young Norse goddess. Vandala sent Lady Death to different realms, where she learned various lessons about herself and her glorious destiny. For a time, Lady Death found peace in a realm that resembled her medieval home. Her peace was shattered, however, when Asteroth, a monstrosity from Hell, laid waste to the realm to avenge Lucifer's death. Lady Death destroyed Asteroth, but realized that she would always be a warrior, never to have the peace she craved. Resigned to her fate, Lady Death agreed to journey with Vandala to Asgard, home of the Norse gods, to battle the ancient evil of Genocide, a supernatural killer intent on destroying Asgard's gods. Having learned that she has sisters in Asgard, Lady Death has continued fighting for the realm to this day.





UPCOMING HIGHLIGHTS

As the *Lady Death: The Crucible* mini-series wraps up, Lady Death will learn lots more about her ties to Asgard, which only serves to strengthen her resolve to fight for the Norse gods' land. Also, Lady Death's sword, Darkness, is obliterated in *The Crucible #4*, but since the lady can never be without a sword for long, she acquires a new one, this time named Destroyer. Lady Death writer/creator Brian Pulido warns that the character's mental link with Destroyer will be much darker than the one she shared with Darkness.

Lady Death: The Crucible will end in early 1997, as the regular *Lady Death* team of Pulido, Steven Hughes and Jason Jensen will gear up for next October's *Lady Death #0*. "Lady Death's direction changes dramatically," says Pulido of this major book. "It will be her name, the most important issue to date. Lady Death will fight death itself and the outcome will be very... disturbing [maniacal laughter]." The ramifications of these changes will then be explored in late 1997 as successive *Lady Death* mini-series will keep her on the shelves each month for the foreseeable future.

RECOMMENDED HIGHLIGHTS

Always wanted to give *Lady Death* a try, but just didn't know where to jump in? Check out these issues starring the Diva of Death, as recommended by head Chaos! man, Brian Pulido.

- ***Lady Death: The Reckoning* #1-#4**—"The Reckoning gives the basic picture of who Hope is, and how she came to be in charge of Hell. Highly recommended."
- ***Lady Death* #1/2 (1994)**—"The *Wizard* special issue was fun to do, because it showed more of Hope's personality than had been seen, and allowed her to resolve some issues with her mother's spirit."
- ***Lady Death: Between Heaven and Hell* #1-#4**—"Plain and simple. Lady Death kicks Lucifer's ass, which is no easy feat."
- ***Evil Ernie: Straight to Hell* #4**—"Although it's primarily an Evil Ernie story, it's also a very touching tale about Lady Death's attempt to return to Earth. A real tear-jerker."

SIMILAR TASTES

If *Lady Death* sounds like your cup of java, Pulido recommends you check out *Purgatori*, also published by Chaos! Also, while Pulido is stumped when it comes to picking other comics that *Lady Death* fans would like, he did recommend a bunch of movies that share the tone of Lady Death and her adventures, such as "Braveheart," and "Far and Away."

Matthew Brady, who wrote a bunch of other stuff in this issue, thinks Lady Death just needs to lighten up.

THE GUIDE TO COLLECTIBLE CARD GAMES

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CARD MARKET

by Joyce M. Steel

The Force in February is *Star Wars*

As the month for love and presidents unfolds, the card-makin' world has very little on tap with a romantic and/or political twist. Unless you count Luke Skywalker getting a good luck kiss from Princess Leia (his sister!) in the best sci-fi film of all time.

That's right, "Star Wars" is back in a big way these days, what with the 20th Anniversary "Special Edition" releases of all three Trilogy films to theaters. Topps parties like any good card manufacturer should, by printin' up a new set! *Star Wars Trilogy: Special Edition*, a 72-carder in Widevision, features 60 cards devoted to that super fantastic property, "Star Wars: A New Hope," made up with all new special effects and never-before-seen footage. This set has Chewbacca and his Wookiee pals screaming for more. The rest of the cards in the set are split between Trilogy completers "The Empire Strikes Back" and "Return of the Jedi." Topps is promising primo quality too, with clear images, double UV-coating and foil stamping. Chasing the set are two Trilogy Special Edition Holograms and six Topps Laser cards, both randomly inserted in the card run, as well as a Special Edition 3D card in every display box (nine cards per pack, suggested retail price $1.99).

SAVAGE CARDS

Did I say there's nothing romantic about this month's cards? There is for fans who looovve Savage Dragon! Erik Larsen's finned one finally gets a set of his own with a WildStorm *Savage Dragon* cover gallery set that showcases 'em all—from the original *Savage Dragon* mini-series to every regular issue up to #38 (including variants) to the *Dragon: Blood and Guts* mini-series and even the trade paperback covers! An artists gallery features new art by fan faves like Adam Hughes, Bill Sienkiewicz, Sam Kieth and others. The 90-card set is chased by a nine-card Erik Larsen Gallery subset of new art (four/box), nine stickers (four/box) and a five-card subset that forms a mobile (one/box) (eight cards per pack, suggested retail $1.75).

HEY MOE!

The funny-bone-tickler of the month is Duo-Card's *The Three Stooges Collection*, 72 cards dedicated to the slapstick shtick of Larry, Moe and Curly...and the fourth Stooge, Shemp. (Hey! What about replacement stooge Curly Joe?) The chase cards could be the best part of the series, with three Die-Cut Stooges Monument cards superimposing their mugs on Mt. Rushmore, the Lincoln Memorial and an Egyptian Sphinx (1:15), and three Chromium "Antics" cards (1:15) (seven cards per pack, suggested retail $1.89).

BUBBLE BASEBALL

Chewable baseball cards? ? *Wild Pitch* is the first printed bubble gum baseball card, and we heartily recommend you pick up a pack. The graphics are outta sight...and when you get tired of lookin' at 'em, you can just pop a card in your mouth and blow bubbles with it. There are 12 gum designs and one real trading card in the series, plus a chase card too: a foil-stamped "Player of the Year" card's being randomly inserted during the first six months of production (five gums, one card per pack, suggested retail price $.99...what a "steal!" Get it? Baseball...steal! Never mind...)

BOOP-BOOP-BE-DOOP!

Betty Boop fans are treated to a second Krome Productions series of 45 Chromium cards, chased by a parallel HoloChrome sticker set (one per pack) and five Black & Silver Spot-Red HoloChromes randomly inserted in the run. Box buyers'll get one of five oversized Chromium Cards (four cards plus one sticker per pack, suggested retail $2.50).

DISH FOR NEXT ISH:

Though Fleer/SkyBox was too busy to produce a set this month, get ready for more *X-Men* in March. And WildStorm helps fans brush up on their French *and* their Mythology with a new CCG...

Joyce Steel tried to cut in line to see "Star Wars: The Special Edition" on opening night and lemme tell you, she did see plenty of stars...just not in the theater.

"All right, pull over and let's see your license and registration." Topps' *Star Wars Trilogy: Special Edition* set

"Actually, no; I don't think we need drug-testing in major league sports. And hey, you finished with that sandwich?" *Wild Pitch*, the first chewable baseball card

"Alright, who's been slippin' estrogen in my coffee?" WildStorm's *Savage Dragon* cover gallery set

the Wizard CARD Price Guide

Thanks to pricing information provided by retailers throughout the country, the following card price guide is the most accurate listing available for these trading cards. In the following price guide, cards are shaded to highlight an increase or decrease from last month's listing. [illegible] Also, please note that this is only a guide—prices may vary depending on both the local availability and popularity of a set or card. A [illegible] box indicates a new listing. If a particular common card does not appear in a list of a set's common cards, it is known as a single card and is valued at a price within the single cards price range which appears near the top of the listing. [illegible] notes that the price is not available.

[illegible]
SKYBOX 1995
- Full Set (90) $18.00
- Unopened Box 32.00
- 3-Card Dark Knight Set 40.00
- 9-Card Foil Set 65.00
- 2-Card Pop-Up Set [illegible]
- Single cards 10-[illegible]

[illegible]
FLEER SKYBOX 1996
- Full Set [illegible] $[illegible].00
- Unopened Box 48.00
- [illegible] Set 4[illegible].00
- 9-Card Canvas Set 30.00
- 9-[illegible] Power Blast Set 38.00
- Single cards [illegible]-25

[illegible]
WILDSTORM 1996
- Full Set [illegible] [illegible]
- Unopened Box [illegible]
- [illegible] in the Dark Set [illegible]
- 4-Card [illegible] Set [illegible]
- Single cards [illegible]

SERIES 2

WILDSTORM 1996
- Full Set [illegible] $30.00
- Unopened Box [illegible].00
- 9-Card [illegible] Motion Set 90.00
- Foil Motion Card 3.00
- Single cards 30-35

[illegible]
FLEER SKYBOX 1996
- Full Set (90) $18.00
- Full [illegible] Set (90) [illegible].00
- Unopened Box 55.00
- 2-Card Chromium Set 35.00
- 2-Card Clear Chrome Set 50.00
- 6-Card Spectra Etch Set 35.00
- [illegible]-Card Master Villain Set 70.00
- Single Cards 15-25

BATMAN MOVIE
TOPPS 1989
- Full Set (132 cards/22 Stickers) $12.00
- Factory Glossy Set 30.00
- Unopened Box 9.00
- Single cards .05-.10
- Single Stickers .25-.30

SERIES 2

TOPPS 1989
- Full Set (132 cards/22 Stickers) $9.00
- Factory Glossy Set 30.00
- Unopened Box 6.00
- Single cards .05-.[illegible]
- Single Stickers .5-.20

BATMAN THE ANIMATED SERIES
TOPPS 1993
- Full Set (100) $1[illegible].00
- Unopened Box 30.00
- 6-Card [illegible] Set 48.00
- Single Cards 15-20

SERIES 2

TOPPS 1994
- Full Set (100) $12.00
- Unopened Box 30.00
- 4-Card [illegible] Set 50.00
- Single cards 10-[illegible]5

[illegible]
FLEER ULTRA 1995
- Full Set (120) $16.00
- Unopened Box 45.00
- 2-Card Video Set 7.00
- 10-Card Animation Set 30.00
- 36-Card Hologram Set 30.00
- Single cards 10-15

[illegible]
FLEER 1995
- Full Set (100) $20.00
- Full Silver Flasher Set (100) 90.00
- Unopened Box 60.00
- 4-Card 3-D Hologram Set 40.00
- 8-Card Movie Preview Set 25.00
- 10-Card Gold Blaster Set 25.00
- Single cards 20-35

[illegible]
FLEER [illegible] 1996
- Full Silver Set (50) $30.00
- Full Gold Set (50) 40.00
- Full Hologram Set (54) 80.00
- Unopened Box [illegible].00
- 4-Card Silver Holoaction Set 18.00
- 4-Card Gold Holoaction Set 24.00
- 6-Card SC Over Power Set 60.00
- Holo [illegible] Card 35.00
- Single Silver Cards .55-.65
- Single Gold Cards .75-.85

[illegible]
TOPPS [illegible]
- Full Set (88) $5.00
- Unopened Box 8.00
- [illegible] Stadium Insert Cards Set [illegible] 2.00
- Single cards .0[illegible]-.20

[illegible]
TOPPS [illegible] 1997
- Full Set [illegible] $8.00
- Unopened Box 4.00
- Single cards .05-.[illegible]5

BATMAN: SAGA OF THE DARK KNIGHT
SKYBOX 1994
- Full Set (100) $8.00
- Unopened Box 20.00
- 5-Card Spectra Etch Set 40.00
- SkyDisc 10.00
- Single cards .10-.75

[illegible]
COMIC IMAGES 1994
- Full Set (90) $7.00
- Unopened Box 25.00
- 3-Card Cover Art Set 60.00
- 6-Card Chromium Set 40.00
- Medallion Card 25.00
- Jeff Smith Signed Sketch Card 60.00
- Single cards .05-.10

SERIES 2

COMIC IMAGES 1996
- Full Set—All-Chromium (90) $25.00
- Unopened Box 60.00
- 3-Card Cover Art Set 60.00
- 6-Card MagnaChrome 48.00
- Medallion Card 25.00
- Jeff Smith Signed Sketch Card 60.00
- Single Cards .30-.50

SERIES 3

COMIC IMAGES 1996
- Full Set (90) $18.00
- Unopened Box 40.00
- 3-Card [illegible] Set 32.00
- 6-Card Silver Art Set 40.00
- Box Bone Card [illegible].00
- Jeff Smith Signed Sketch Card 60.00
- Single cards [illegible]

[illegible]
[illegible] 1996
- Full Set (50) $14.00
- Full Sticker Set (50) [illegible]
- Unopened Box 60.00
- 4-Card Mystery Chromium Set 38.00
- 5-Card NeoChrome Set [illegible]
- Trent Kaniuga Signed Card 50.00
- Single Cards .25-.35

[illegible]
[illegible] 1996
- Full Set (90) $[illegible].00
- Unopened Box 70.00
- 3-Card OverPrint Set 45.00
- 8-Card Red Hot Set 6.00
- 9-Card [illegible] Series Set 55.00
- Single cards .10-.20

[illegible]
[illegible] 1996
- Full Set (90) $25.00
- Unopened Box 60.00
- 3-Card Rare Art Set [illegible]
- 6-Card MagnaChrome Set 60.00
- 6-Card Uncut Sheet 20.00
- Single Cards .20-.30

[illegible]
SKYBOX 1992
- Full Set (100) $8.00
- 10-Card Hologram Set 25.00
- Unopened Box 9.00
- [illegible] Set (1,500 made) 35.00
- Single cards .05-.60
- 9 Modern Age Green Lantern .85
- 16 Golden Age Superman .75
- 7 Silver Age Superman .75
- 8 Modern Age Superman .00
- 65 Nightwing [illegible]
- 70 [illegible] .[illegible]0
- 78 Darkseid .75

[illegible]
SKYBOX 1993
- Full Set (100) $8.00
- Unopened Box 13.00
- 6-Card Hologram Set 78.00
- Single cards .15-.30
- 37 Superman 2.00
- 44 Green Lantern 1.50
- 45 Flash 1.50
- 59 Nightwing 1.50
- 80 [illegible] 1.50
- 1[illegible] Death 2.00
- 119 Sandman 2.00
- 13[illegible] Lobo [illegible] 1.00
- 134 Doomsday 1.25
- 146 Fire Ray 1.00

[illegible]
SKYBOX 1994
- Full Set (90) $12.00
- Unopened Box 30.00
- Single cards .20-.35
- 4-Card Foil Set 18.00
- 5-Card Spectra Foil Set 40.00
- Superman 2.00
- 3 Superboy [illegible].00
- 23 Nightwing 1.50
- 28 Batman (Original) 2.00
- 29 Robin .25
- 30 Batman, Azrael .50
- 32 Joker .25
- 33 Catwoman .75
- 36 Two Face [illegible].00
- 46 [illegible] Lantern (Kyle) 1.50
- 50 [illegible] Jordan 1.50
- [illegible] Flash 1.50
- 53 [illegible] 1.25
- 62 Lobo 1.00
- 70 Aquaman 1.25
- 78 The Ray 1.00
- Superman SkyDisc 80.00

[illegible]
FLEER [illegible] 1996
- Full Set (134 cards) $750.00
- Starter Deck (69 cards) 9.00
- Starter Box (12 decks) [illegible]
- Booster Pack (9 cards) [illegible]
- Booster Box (36 packs) 60.00

NAME	RARITY	PRICE
Azrael Hero Card	[illegible]	[illegible]
Batman Hero Card	[illegible]	[illegible]
Batman Martial Arts Expert	[illegible]	[illegible]
Robin Hero Card	[illegible]	2.00
Superman Hero Card	[illegible]	[illegible].00

DC VERSUS MARVEL
[illegible]
- Full Set (90) $16.00
- Unopened Box [illegible]
- 2-Card Merge Set 40.00
- 7-Card [illegible] Set 71.00
- 8-Card Impact Set 50.00
- Single cards .15-.20

[illegible]
[illegible]
- Full Set (90) $14.00
- Unopened Box 44.00
- 6-Card Gold Foil Set 90.00
- Death SkyDisc 80.00
- Single cards .10-.20

DC VILLAINS
[illegible] SKYBOX [illegible]
- Full Set (90) $12.00
- Unopened Box 40.00
- 3-Card [illegible] Embossed Set 32.00
- 9-Card Spectra Etch Set 58.00
- SkyMotion Redemption Card 50.00
- Single cards .10-.20

[illegible]
[illegible] 1996
- Full Set (90) $14.00
- Unopened Box 50.00
- 8-Card Deviant Set 70.00
- 9-Card [illegible] Set 92.00
- Single Cards .10-.20

[illegible]
TOPPS [illegible]
- Full Set (132 cards/33 Stickers) $40.00
- Unopened Box 70.00
- Single cards .20-.25
- Single Stickers .50-.60

SERIES 2

TOPPS 1980
- Full Set (132 Cards/33 Stickers) $30.00
- Unopened Box 55.00
- Single cards .5-.25
- Single Stickers .35-.45

SERIES 3

TOPPS 1980
- Full Set (88 cards/22 Stickers) $32.00
- Unopened Box 80.00
- Single cards .20-.30
- Single Stickers .45-.50

[illegible]
TOPPS 1994
- Full Set (145) $25.00
- Unopened Box 50.00
- 6-Card Movie Poster Set 20.00
- 10-Card Chrome Set 50.00
- Single Cards .5-.20

[illegible]
KROME PRODUCTIONS 1994
- Full Set (100) $20.00
- Unopened Box 45.00
- 5-Card Chromium Set 50.00
- Single cards .15-.25

SERIES 2

KROME PRODUCTIONS 1995
- Full Set All Chromium (100) $25.00
- Unopened Box 45.00
- 5-Card ClearChrome Set 50.00
- Steven Hughes Signed Card 50.00
- Brian Pulido Signed Card 50.00
- Single cards .20-.30

FLEER MARVEL
FLEER 1994
- Full Set (150) $55.00
- Unopened Box 85.00
- 8-Card Power Blast Set 95.00
- Single Cards .50-.75
- 2 The Incredible Hulk 2.00
- 3 With Great Power 2.00
- 5 Spider-Man 2.00
- 16 Captain America 2.00
- 6 Venom 2.00
- 72 The New Hulk 2.00
- 82 Child of the Future 2.00
- 100 Lethal Protector 2.00
- 1[illegible]2 [illegible] 2.00
- 1[illegible]8 Wolverine Defeated 2.00
- 1[illegible] [illegible] 2.00
- 75 Magneto Returns 2.00
- 6[illegible] Wolverine 2.00

FLEER MARVEL ANNUAL
FLEER [illegible]
- Full Set (150) $45.00
- Unopened Box [illegible].00
- 3-Card [illegible] Blast Set 11.00
- 7-Card Chromium Set 71.00
- 7-Card Hotshots Set 50.00
- 14-Card Power Blast Set 32.00
- Single cards .40-.85
- 3 Jean Grey 1.00
- 4 Gambit 2.00
- 9 Cyclops 1.00
- 10 Sabretooth 1.75
- 1[illegible] Cable 1.75
- 39 Broken Claws 2.00
- 40 Final Sanction 2.00
- 41 Healing Factor 2.00
- 42 Rogue .80
- 44 Nathan Dayspring 1.75
- 49 Spider-Man .25
- 50 Lifeforce 1.25
- 51 Pursuit .25
- 60 Scarlet Spider .25
- 65 Scarlet Spider vs. Venom 1.00
- 66 Venom [illegible].75
- 75 Daredevil 1.00
- 82 Hulk 1.00
- 96 Spider-Man 2099 1.00
- 107 Captain America 1.00
- 1[illegible] Thor 1.00
- 133 Iron Man 1.00

[illegible]
[illegible]
- Full Set (107) $28.00
- Unopened Box 70.00
- 9-Card Gen-Active Set 90.00
- 9-Card Glow in the Dark Set 80.00
- Single Refractor Card [illegible]
- Single cards .20-.30

[illegible]
TOPPS 1996
- Full Set (54) $18.00
- Unopened Box 32.00
- 6-Card Glow-in-the-Dark Set 20.00
- 6-Card Mirror Foil Set 25.00
- 6-Card Thermographic Set 20.00
- Single Cards .15-.20

Single Cards	[illegible]

[illegible]

TOPPS (1995)

Full Set (72)	$15.00
Full [illegible] set (72)	[illegible]
Unopened Box	[illegible]
[illegible] Set	[illegible]
[illegible] card	[illegible]
Single cards	[illegible] .25

[illegible]

Full [illegible] set [illegible]	$44.00
Single cards	[illegible] .25

[illegible]

Full set [illegible]	$27.00
Unopened box	[illegible]
[illegible] set	[illegible]
[illegible] Chrome Set	[illegible]
Single cards	[illegible] .25

[illegible]

Full set (90)	$40.00
Unopened box (Red)	[illegible]
Unopened box (Blue)	[illegible]
Unopened box [illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible] set	[illegible]
[illegible] Signature Set	[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] (1995)

Full set (90)	$20.00
Unopened Box	[illegible]
[illegible] HoloChrome Set	[illegible]
Single Cards	.25-.50

SERIES 2

WILDSTORM (1996)

Full Set (90)	$20.00
Unopened Box	[illegible]
9-Card HoloChrome Set	[illegible]
Single cards	.20-.25

[illegible]

Full set [illegible]	$19.00
Unopened box	[illegible]
[illegible] Chrome set	[illegible]
[illegible] Set	[illegible]
Single cards	[illegible]

[illegible]

Full set (90)	$[illegible]
Unopened Box	[illegible]
[illegible] Set	60.00
Single cards	[illegible]

[illegible]

Full Set (90)	$[illegible]
Unopened Box	[illegible]
[illegible] set	[illegible]
[illegible] set	[illegible]
[illegible] card	[illegible]
Single Cards	[illegible] .25

[illegible]

TOPPS (1995)

Full Set (72)	$16.00
Full [illegible] set (72)	[illegible]
Unopened Box	[illegible]
[illegible] Set	[illegible]
[illegible] set	[illegible]
Deluxe Reader [illegible] Card	[illegible]
Single cards	.20-.25

SERIES 2

TOPPS (1996)

Full set [illegible]	$14.00
Full foil set (72)	[illegible]
Unopened Box	[illegible]
[illegible] set	[illegible]
[illegible] set	[illegible]
Single cards	[illegible] .25

SERIES 3

TOPPS (1996)

Full set [illegible]	$14.00
Full foil set (72)	[illegible]
Unopened Box	[illegible]
[illegible] set	[illegible]
[illegible] set	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]
Single cards	[illegible] .25

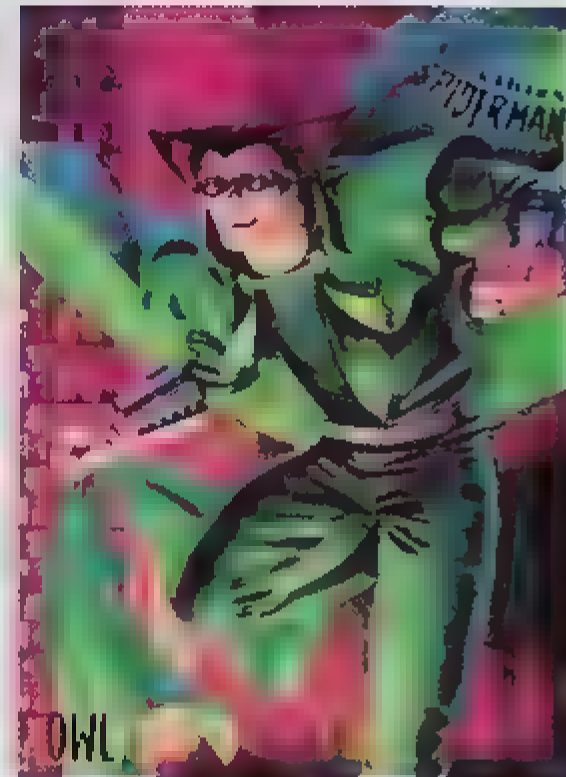
[illegible]

Full Factory Set (30)	$36.00
Single Cards	1.00-1.25

[illegible]

FLEER ULTRA (1995)

Full set (100)	$25.00
Unopened Box	[illegible]
9-Card [illegible] Set	[illegible]



20-Card [illegible] Set	[illegible]
Single Cards	.20-.30

[illegible]

Full set [illegible]	$[illegible]
Unopened Box	[illegible]
[illegible] set	[illegible]
[illegible] set	[illegible]

[illegible]	[illegible] Card Magneto [illegible]	[illegible]
Single cards		.25-.50
7	Wolverine	2.75
10	[illegible]	2.75
19	[illegible]	2.75
[illegible]	Magneto	2.75
57	[illegible]	2.75
64	[illegible]	2.75
[illegible]	Wolverine	2.50

[illegible]	Cable	[illegible]
[illegible] card [illegible]		[illegible]

[illegible]

Full set [illegible]		$[illegible]
Unopened Box		[illegible]
Full [illegible] set		[illegible]
Full [illegible] set		[illegible]
[illegible] set		[illegible]
Single cards		[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	
[illegible]	Wolverine	
43	[illegible]	[illegible]
44	[illegible]	[illegible]
49	Wolverine vs. Omega Red	[illegible]
50	Omega Red vs. Wolverine	[illegible]
52	Wolverine vs. [illegible]	[illegible]
53	[illegible] vs. Wolverine	[illegible]
85	[illegible]	.75
86	[illegible]	.75
91	[illegible]	2.00
93	[illegible]	2.00
98	[illegible] of Wolverine	2.00
[illegible]	Wolverine 3-D	[illegible]

[illegible]

RETAILER NETWORK

***Wizard*, by staying in touch with hundreds of retailers throughout the country, keeps a close eye on the country's hottest back issues. Here are January's hottest back issues.**

TOP 10 COMICS

1. [illegible] #1

WRITERS: David Wohl, Brian Haberlin and Christina Z. ARTISTS: Michael Turner and D Tron

In honor of *Blade*'s publisher Top Cow, let's see just how many cow in-jokes we can jam in this write-up. Here goes: ...with the udderly (There's the first one!) amazing fan reaction to *Witchblade*, her first issue cut through the bull (#2!), mooved (It's a hat trick!) up through the herd (#4) and fenced (#5) itself in at the #1 spot. Not content to just sit on their butts chewin' cud (Half a dozen, baby!), them Top Cow folks began milking (*¡Siete!* *¡Siete!*) this property with the *Medieval Spawn/Witchblade* and *Tales of the Witchblade* series, making *Witchblade* one of comics' hottest...uh, cows (Eight! Eight!).

2. [illegible] #1

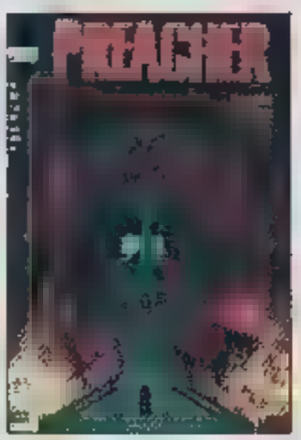
WRITER: Randy Queen ARTISTS: Randy Queen, Jason Gorder and Mario Alquiza

Ariel Chyde is not your average teen. Besides having a 20-inch waist and the obligatory D-cups, this young lass also happens to be able to channel demonic powers. What's new about that? Um... nothing, really, but *Darkchyde* #1 does have what it takes to get you horntoad fanboys to shell out some major coin for this particular back issue and make it debut in the number two slot. Hey, this comic may not be the most original concept around, but c'mon, it's got a hot babe, scary demons and a whole otta teenage angst. If this sure-fire formula doesn't win you over, then you must be reading something without pictures.

3. [illegible] #1

WRITER: Garth Ennis
ARTIST: Steve Dillon

Like a scorching case of herpes, *Preacher* #1 just won't go away. This reoccurring entry is a sore spot with us. Why, you ask? Well, there seems to be no cure for *Preacher*-mania. Rash as it may seem, the average fan is just itchin' to get his hands on a copy of the fairly scarce *Preacher* #1. As a result, this issue has chronically appeared in the Top 10 column for many months, forcing us writers to come up with more and more witty emissions about this unsettling comic. Even more upsetting is that the book is still consistently good, meaning it's probably stayin' on these charts for a while.



NUMBER THREE

NUMBER FOUR

4. [illegible] #1

WRITER: Mark Waid
ARTIST: Alex Ross

Golly! Why is it that when Billy Batson says, "Shazam!," he changes into the powerful Captain Marvel, and when Gomer Pyle says, "Shazam!," the only thing that changes is the dumb-ass expression on that goofy hillbilly face of his? Sure, he's got a beautiful singing voice, but could Pyle go toe-to-toe with Superman? Heck, that jarhead doesn't have the coordination to march in a straight line. Anyhoo, if you haven't seen this much-praised Elseworlds series, then you're missing one great story. And with Alex Ross' amazing art, you can be a barefoot, illiterate hick from Mayberry and *still* enjoy it.

NUMBER FIVE

5. JLA #1

WRITER: Grant Morrison
ARTISTS: Howard Porter and John Dell

Who'd win in a fight: The JLA or the Super-Friends? Well, the same characters on both sides would cancel each other out, so it'd come down to the Martian Manhunter, Green Lantern and Flash versus Robin, Marvin and Wendy. Yeah, it's kinda lopsided, but we'd love seein' that smart-ass "Super" Marvin get the large intestine beat outta him. Anyway, the newest JLA has its original (and bestest!) line-up again and we couldn't be happier, unless they were beating the crap out of Marvin.

NUMBER SIX

6. [illegible] #1

WRITER: Warren Ellis
ARTISTS: Humberto Ramos and Sal Regla

Reading DV8 is a lot like accidentally walking into the wrong party. The people are dressed a little too alternatively (y'know, unkempt and funkified). The place looks like a landfill with a roof. In the corner is a disemboweled body chained to a bed. Directly in front of you, some guy is holding the decapitated head of his girlfriend. And everyone stares at you when you enter. Most of us at this point would run like little girls. The good thing is that this is only a comic (which'll soon be for mature readers). By the way, the bad thing is that this is the exact same scenario seen at last year's Wild Christmas party.

NUMBER SEVEN

7. [illegible] #1

WRITERS: Jim Lee and Brandon Choi
ARTISTS: Jim Lee and Scott Williams

Hey, what would really happen if four humans were bombarded by radioactive cosmic rays? Well, if it was more than 800 rads, initially there'd be severe nausea, vomiting and diarrhea due to the destroying and deforming cell tissue at the atomic level. If beta particles were present, they'd leave patches of fried skin called "beta burns," and these four folks'd suffer a slow and agonizing death within 14 days. Guess that means the FF are pretty darn lucky.

NUMBER EIGHT

8. [illegible] #1

WRITER: Garth Ennis
ARTIST: John McCrea

Just when you think he's out of the Top 10, you violence-fantasizing fanboys keep pulling him back in! After a month-long hiatus from these pages, Tommy Monaghan (a.k.a. Hitman) is back with guns a-blazin' and X-ray eyes a-gazin'. How can you keep out a title that has two bullet-riddled corpses as villains? And if anybody can make corpses fun, it's Ennis, who also consistently shows up in our Top 10 Hottest Writers section. Go figure. So, if you gore-nuts fanboys like guns, bullets and meta-freaks, please go to the nearest comic store, and not the local Guns R Us, okay?

NUMBER NINE

9. [illegible] #1

WRITER: Peter David
ARTIST: Gary Frank and Cam Smith

"Look up in the sky! It's a bird! It's a plane! No! It's a morphing alien with a split personality! It's a ring, don't it? Okay, maybe it does look a lot like the pentameter guy. And yeah, we stole plagiarized it. But hey, we're not Clark Kent, we're Peter David. You know, the guy that's writing Supergirl, Aquaman and the Incredible Hulk. Thanks to him and artist Gary Frank, Supergirl is once again in the Top 10. So if you can't try and pick up this issue, cuz we hear they're selling faster than a speeding bullet." (Okay, we did it again—sorry).

NUMBER TEN

10. [illegible] #2

WRITERS: David Wohl, Brian Haberlin and Christina Z.
ARTISTS: Michael Turner and D-Tron

Ever thought about how convenient it must be for Sara Pezzini to have the shapeshifting Witchblade? She can handle just about every situation with that gauntlet thingie. Who the hell needs a Swiss Army knife when you've got the Witchblade! Need to open a can? Use the Witchblade. Screws loose? No problem, use the Witchblade. Forgot your keys? Witchblade time! Need your lug nuts tightened? The 'blade's right there. Heck, it can do so much, we'd never leave home, y'know!

THE NEXT TEN

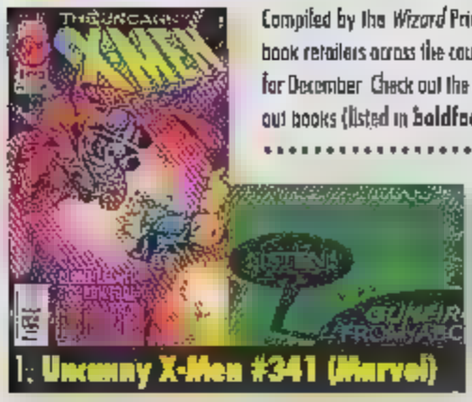
THE NEXT 10 HOT BOOKS AND THE COMPANIES THAT MAKE THEM

11. [illegible] #1 SIRIUS
12. [illegible] #2 DC
13. [illegible] #100 MARVEL
14. [illegible] #1 CHAOS!
15. [illegible] #1 DC
16. [illegible] #81 DC
17. [illegible] #1 IMAGE
18. [illegible] #2 MARVEL
19. [illegible] #1 MARVEL
20. [illegible] #1 TOPPS

WIZARD TOP 100

The highest-ordered comic books for the month of DECEMBER.

Compiled by the *Wizard* Price Guide staff and working off the data supplied by comic book retailers across the country, the following is a listing of the highest-ordered comics for December. Check out the column on the right for an explanation of this month's standout books (listed in **boldface type**).



1. **Uncanny X-Men #341 (Marvel)**
2. X-Men #61 (Marvel)
3. Wolverine #110 (Marvel)
4. Spawn #57 (Image)
5. Fantastic Four #4 (Marvel)
6. **Curse of the Spawn #4 (Image)**
7. Iron Man #4 (Marvel)
8. Spawn "The Impaler" #3 (Image)
9. Generation X #24 (Marvel)
10. **Onslaught: Epilogue (Marvel)**
11. Avengers #4 (Marvel)
12. **X-Man #24 (Marvel)**
13. Captain America #4 (Marvel)
14. Gen 13 #16 (Image)
15. X-Force #63 (Marvel)
16. X-Factor #131 (Marvel)
17. Cable #40 (Marvel)
18. Magneto #4 (Marvel)
19. **Amazing Spider-Man #420 (Marvel)**
20. Gen13 Bootleg #2 (Image)
21. **DC/Marvel: All Access #4 (DC)**
22. Excalibur #106 (Marvel)
23. **Incredible Hulk #450 (Marvel)**
24. Deadpool #2 (Marvel)
25. Spider-Man #77 (Marvel)
26. **JLA #2 (DC)**
27. Spectacular Spider-Man #243 (Marvel)
28. X.S.E. #4 (Marvel)
29. Sensational Spider-Man #13 (Marvel)
30. **Ballistic/Wolverine (Top Cow)**
31. Sabretooth & Mystique #3 (Marvel)
32. **The Darkness #2 (Top Cow)**
33. Tales of the A. of Apocalypse #1 (Marvel)
34. Domino #2 (Marvel)
35. **The X-Files #25 (Topps)**
36. Batman #539 (DC)
37. Down #5 (Sirius)
38. **Daredevil/Shi (Marvel)**
39. **Weapon Zero/Silver Surfer (Top Cow)**
40. Supergirl #6 (DC)
41. **Shi/Daredevil (Crusade)**
42. **Ghost Rider/Cyblade (Marvel)**
43. Detective Comics #706 (DC)
44. Lady Death: The Crucible #2 (Chaos!)
45. Elektra #4 (Marvel)
46. Superman #120 (DC)
47. **Ghost Rider/Ballistic (Marvel)**
48. Logan: Shadow Society (Marvel)
49. **Catwoman/Vampirella: The Furies (DC)**
50. Gen13 Zine #1 (Image)
51. Sin City: Lost, Lonely and Lethal (D.H.)
52. Adventures of Superman #543 (DC)
53. Action Comics #730 (DC)
54. Spider-Man: Hobgoblin Lives! #2 (Marvel)
55. Batman: The Long Halloween #3 (DC)
56. Pitt #12 (Full Bleed)
57. Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight #91 (DC)
58. Marvel Universe #1 (Marvel)
59. S. Wars: T. of the Jedi—G.A.S. #3 (D.H.)
60. Superman: The Man of Tomorrow #7 (DC)
61. The X-Files: Season One #6 (Topps)
62. Nightwing #5 (DC)
63. Green Lantern #83 (DC)
64. **Supergirl Plus #1 (DC)**
65. **Batman Plus #1 (DC)**
66. **Superman Plus #1 (DC)**
67. Preacher #22 (DC)
68. Batman: Shadow of the Bat #59 (DC)
69. **Venom: Tooth & Claw #3 (Marvel)**
70. Spider-Man Unlimited #15 (Marvel)
71. Imperial Guard #2 (Marvel)
72. Mars Attacks The Image Universe #1 (Image)
73. Robin #38 (DC)
74. Code of Honor #1 (Marvel)
75. Flash #122 (DC)
76. Catwoman #42 (DC)
77. S. Wars: X-Wing R.S.—W. Princess #2 (D.H.)
78. Astro City (Vol. 2) #5 (Image)
79. **Green Lantern/Flash: Faster Friends #1 (DC)**
80. **Flash/Green Lantern: Faster Friends #2 (DC)**
81. Superman/W. Woman: W. Gods Destroy #3 (DC)
82. Thrillkiller #2 (DC)
83. Journey into Mystery #506 (Marvel)
84. Wonder Woman #178 (DC)
85. What If? #94 (Marvel)
86. Untold Tales of Spider-Man #18 (Marvel)
87. **Silver Surfer #125 (Marvel)**
88. The Dreaming #9 (DC)
89. Azrael #26 (DC)
90. Teen Titans #5 (DC)
91. WetWorks #24 (Image)
92. Daredevil #361 (Marvel)
93. **Wolverine Encyclopedia Vol. 2 (Marvel)**
94. Spider-Man: The Osborn Journal (Marvel)
95. **Wynonna Earp #1 (Image)**
96. Star Trek: Deep Space Nine #4 (Marvel)
97. Savage Dragon #34 (Image)
98. Superboy #36 (DC)
99. Star Trek: Early Voyages #1 (Marvel)
100. Evil Ernie's Baddest Babes #1 (Chaos!)

AT THE TOP:

In December, everything was pretty much status quo in Top 20 Land; the only significant jumps were *Curse of the Spawn* over both *Iron Man* and *"The Impaler"* (people are slowly starting to see *Curse* as the second regular Spawn series) and *X-Man* over *Captain America*—probably thanks to Nate's Spider-Man crossover which gave *Amazing Spider-Man* a major order push. No matter how popular the Onslaught saga was, it was harder than expected for Marvel to make folks shell out $2.95 for the story's 32-page epilogue.

IN THE MIDDLE:

DC finally sneaks into the chart with the closer to *All Access*, which should've placed much higher, being an X-Man/JLA crossover—the title itself could be to blame. As *JLA* was once again was the highest-charting regular title for DC, the company only has seven books in the Top 50 this month (compared to Marvel's 30), and 31 total in the Top 100 (with only 21 being ongoing titles). Interestingly, only 27 of Marvel's 45 total Top 100 books are ongoing titles, giving Marvel and DC about the same ratio of regular-title Top 100 charters to one-shot/mini-series charters. Joining *Amazing Spidey* this month as a hotter-than-usual Marvel seller this month was *Hulk*, whose back-up story (and cover) featured Doctor Strange finding half the "Reborn" heroes. Marvel's several crossovers with Top Cow and Crusade worked wonders for their individual stars' market success levels, with Ballistic coming out the big winner. Meanwhile, Top Cow's *The Darkness* began what may be a steady rise, as word-of-mouth should bring more fans to this spook-fest. The regular *X-Files* series is back in high-ranking business, thanks to Topps hammering out its issues on a more reliable basis. The *Furies* book gave the DC and Harris antiheroines fairly high numbers.

IN THE SECOND HALF:

Wolverine couldn't overpower inadequate marketing, not enough fans knew he's the main guest star of *Tooth and Claw* or high price points (a $5.95 encyclopedia is out of many fans' ranges). Several of DC's team-up books suffered the high-price blues, as well; no matter how enjoyable the *Plus* issues ($2.95 each) and *Flash/GL* books ($4.95 a pop) may have been, retailers knew that most of their customers couldn't expand their budgets to buy 'em. *Silver Surfer* #125's "Heroes Reborn" connection and Hulk battle helped its sales, and Image's new Bad Girl—er, heroine Wynonna Earp made the chart.

ATTENTION COMIC BOOK RETAILERS:

If you're a retailer who would like to participate in our compiling of the *Wizard* Top 100 (and be a candidate for special prizes), please write to us at the address below.

Top 100 Coordinator
c/o Wizard Press
151 Wells Ave.
Congers, NY 10920-2064
or e-mail us at: **WizardTGTC@aol.com**

SpiderBaby Grafix Presents:

The Tyrant Contest

All dinophiles out there should know that *Tyrant*, Steve Bissette's critically acclaimed series about the life of a Tyrannosaurus Rex, is the best-researched comic around. Steve does tons of research to make sure every last detail about his dinosaur is right. [illegible] now you can get a piece of amazingly detailed dinosaur art [illegible]?

Easy [illegible] just [illegible] you'd [illegible] draw a dinosaur version of your favorite superhero. Maybe a Bat-dino or a Spider-dino. Go nuts and use any medium you wish, 'cause winners will be picked based on quality and creativity. And what winners they'll be with these...

...Prehistoric Prizes

Grand Prize 5: Yeah, five! Five winners will receive an amazing Stephen Bissette original. Make it their favorite dinosaur.

Second Prize 20: Twenty winners will receive Stephen Bissette-autographed copy of Tyrant #1 and a special Bissette-autographed copy of [illegible] Tyrant #3.

Fill this out, attach it to your entry, put it in an envelope and send it to: Tyrant Contest, c/o Wizard Press, P.O. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118.

Deadline is March 31, 1997.

[illegible] is sponsored by Spider Baby Grafix [illegible] the carnosaurs [illegible]

The Legal Bra[illegible]

[illegible] contest is open to anyone except employees of Wizard Press, [illegible] and their immediate families or anyone who thinks the law firm has actually a work reading of Michael Gibbons. Place your name, date of birth, address, city, state, zip and telephone number with area code on the official entry form or a 3-by-5-inch index card and attach to your entry. Refer to entry form in [illegible] separately to: Tyrant Contest, c/o Wizard Press, P.O. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118. No mechanical reproductions of completed forms are accepted, but you can photocopy the entry form before filling it out if you don't want to mess up your magazine. All entries become property of Wizard Press and none will be returned. All taxes (federal, state and local) [illegible] will be the responsibility of the prize winners. No cash equivalent or substitute prizes will be offered. Prizes are awarded in the names of the contest winners and are not transferable. Offer void where prohibited, taxed or restricted by law to a person [illegible] with the [illegible] rules hereof. Anyone who is unfamiliar with *Tyrant* should, at this point, proceed to the nearest comic store and pick up a copy. It's a damn good book, different, but very, very good. All entries must be received at contest headquarters by March 31, 1997. Wizard Press is not responsible for lost, late, misdirected or mutilated entries. Odds of winning will be determined by the number of valid entries received prior to the closing date of the contest. Prize winners will be selected based on quality and creativity from among all properly completed entries by Wizard Press. Judging will take place on April 15, 1997. See above.

[illegible] of winners, available after April 15, 1997, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to: Tyrant Winners, c/o Wizard Press, P.O. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118.

The Tyrant Entry Form

DEADLINE IS MARCH 31, 1997

Name _____ Date of Birth _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Number (with area code) _____

Favorite Dinosaur _____

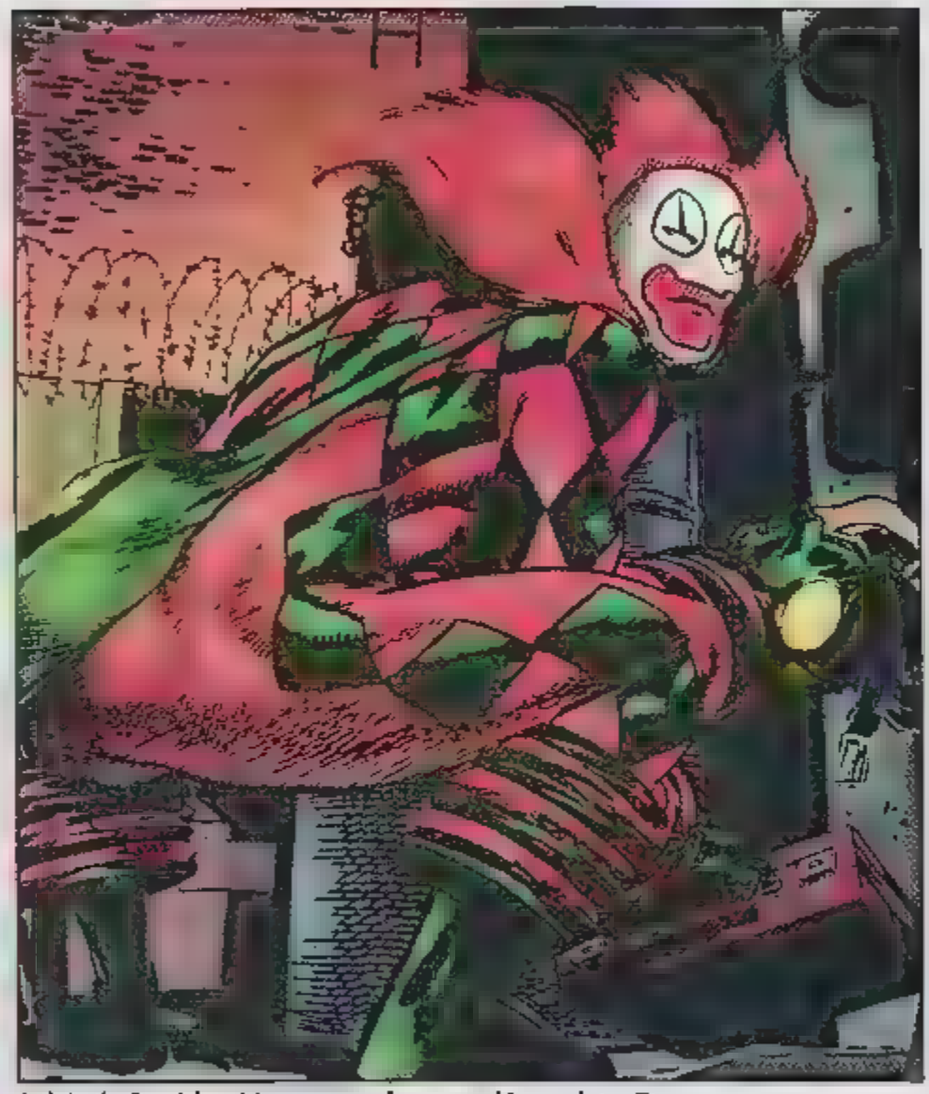
Did you attach your art?

COMIC MARKET NEWS AND SUCH • by Jon Warren and the *Wizard* staff

FANS ARE TOURING ASTRO CITY

Astro City is getting quite a lot of buzz lately. With a considerable amount of critical acclaim and a move to Jim Lee's Homage Comics, readers have started taking notice of the title's smart stories, intriguing characters and sharp art. But what fans are really starting to pick up are the early *Astro City* (Vol. 1) Image issues, particularly the rare #5 and #6. Not many copies of those books exist, and *AC* fans trying to complete their collections might have a tough time doing so.

But don't have a hairy if you can't find 'em—if you're not looking to own these books, and wanna just read the stories, pick up the *Astro City: Life in the Big City* trade paperback, which collects all six issues of the previous series. And, of course, there's the current *Astro City* (Vol. 2) to sink your teeth into. So go out and read both series—it's some of the best comic reading there is!



Jack-in-the-Box (above) is one reason fans are picking up *Astro City*

Below: *JLA* continues to impress

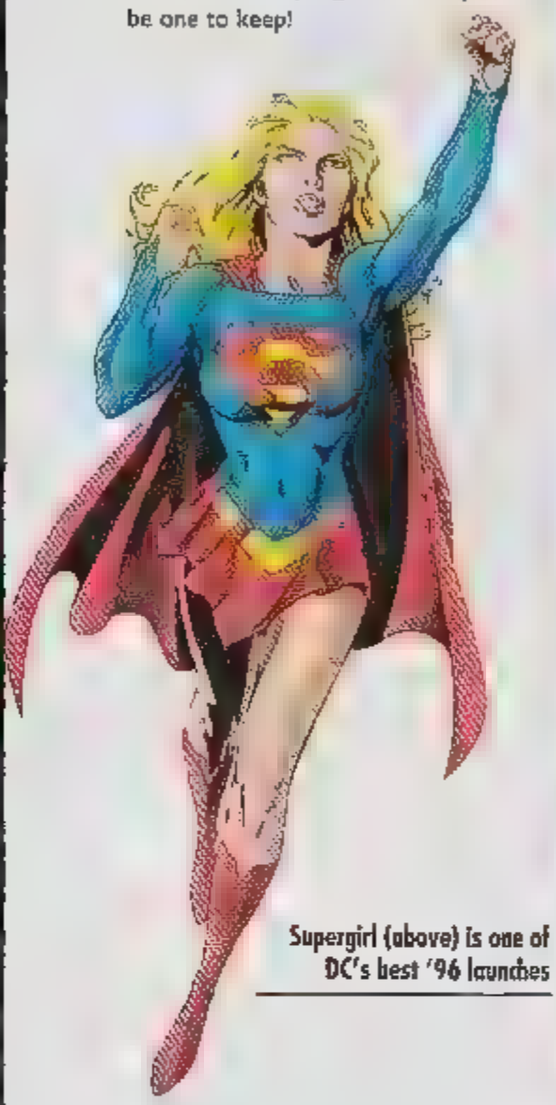
JUSTICE LEAGUE DOES IT AGAIN!

To nobody's surprise (except maybe a few stubborn retailers), DC's new *JLA* book is just about the hottest thing around right now. It's been selling out almost everywhere, and fans love both the story and art. Best of all, this book contains the non-stop action a title with seven major heroes demands, complemented by solid storytelling. The excitement should continue to mount with the appearance of several new and old (revamped) Justice League members in the coming months. Don't worry about the book turning back to the Guy Gardner/Booster Gold days, though—DC promises the Big 7 will remain the focus of the book, and the way sales are going, that looks like a promise they'll keep! And since Warner Bros. has most of the characters' licenses, and the studio is free to use any hero or heroes they want in a movie, wouldn't a JLA flick be a great idea?

DARKCHYLDE KEEPS ON ROLLING

Ever notice something strange about certain comics over the past few years? Some books grow more and more popular, but new issues don't appear on a regular schedule, and sometimes they don't appear at all. The latest book to repeat this odd phenomenon is *Darkchylde*. It's shot to our Top 10 Comics list, yet new issues haven't

been forthcoming in no one knows how ong. But fans shouldn't fret; The title is moving over from Maximum Press to Image Comics, and what started out as a four-issue mini-series might become an ongoing. So grab up those early issues cause either way it goes, *Darkchylde* wi be one to keep!



Supergirl (above) is one of DC's best '96 launches

SUPERGIRL FLYING HIGH

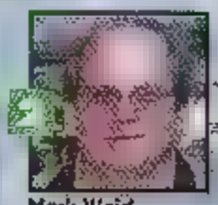
Even with a third printing of her first issue, *Supergirl* is still on the rise as one of 1996's best launches. Re-establishing the character with a brand new supporting cast, DC has yet another book with a strong heroine as its star, following *Catwoman* and *Wonder Woman*. The title's been a consistent Top 50 charter (Even beating out the regular Superman titles!), and the fine work by Peter David and Gary Frank make it regularly entertaining.

If you can still find a first printing of *Supergirl* #1 below four or five bucks, snatch it up, 'cause you ain't gonna find it at that price for too long!

Jon Warren's still trying to fino a Tickle Me Darkchylde doll for

Wizard's Top 10 Writers

Garth Ennis
Preacher, Hitman



Mark Waid
Flash, X-O Manowar

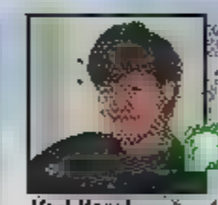
Peter David
Hulk, Aquaman

Scott Lobdell
Generation X, Uncanny X-Men

Neil Gaiman
Sandman

Kurt Busiek
Astro City, Untold Tales of Spider-

Ron Marz
Green Lantern, Superboy



Karl Kesel
Daredevil

James Robinson
Starman, Leave it to Chance

Chuck Dixon
Robin, Green Arrow

Wizard's Top 10 Artists*

Jim Lee
Fantastic Four

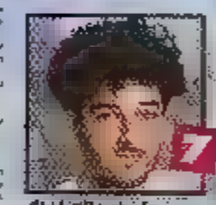
Joe Madureira
Uncanny X-Men

J. Scott Campbell
Gen 13

Alex Ross
Kingdom Come

Greg Capullo
Spawn

Carlos Pacheco
X-Men



Chris Bachalo
Generation X

Walter Portacio
Man Hole

Marc Silvestri
The Darkness

Howard Porter
JLA

* Penciliers and painters

Wizard's Top Ten Professionals lists are derived from a nationwide retailer survey.

Wizard's Up & Coming Creator

JAMES A. HODGKINS

This *Batman: Blackgate* inker's dark style is perfect for a book set in a prison, ain't it? His shadowing of people's faces adds mystery and mood, and conceals all but the eyes to convey malice or anger. Also, his sharp, thick outlines of figures make them more surprising, even against black backgrounds.

Batman: Blackgate associate editor Jordan B. Gorfinkel says: "What makes James' artwork stand out is summarized in one word: atmosphere. With James, as with all the great inker/finishers, you always recognize who the penciller is, but the inks add an extra layer of dimension, texture and vibrancy. Take a look at James' gritty spotter over Joe Staton's incomparable storytelling in *Blackgate*, and his bold strokes over Jim Aparo's classic layouts in the upcoming *Azrael Annual* #2, and you'll see what I mean." ■ *Marc Wilkofsky*

survey: issue 67

QUESTIONS, COMMENTS & CONCERNS

We want to know what you like about this li'l mag of ours. Tell us what you thought about this particular issue of *WIZARD*, what you liked best, and what sucked sour frog-ass. (Use extra paper if you're one of them long-winded types.)

PRICE CHANGES

Are books selling in your area for a lot more or a lot less than *WIZARD* is listing them at?
If they are, we wanna know. List any major discrepancies you feel exist in the *WIZARD* price guide.
(Use extra paper if necessary.)

Title	Issue #	What it sells for in your area

TOP TEN HOTTEST COMICS

What do you see as the hottest comics among the circle of friends you hang out with? List them below, with the hottest book at the number one slot.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

TOP TEN HOTTEST ARTISTS

Who is your favorite comic book artist? Actually, we wanna know who your top 10 favorite artists are. List your favorite artist in the number one slot, followed by your second favorite artist, etc.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

TOP TEN HOTTEST WRITERS

Hang in there, we're almost done. What we need now is the list of your 10 favorite comic book writers. You know the drill: your favorite in pole position, with your second favorite at number two, yadda, yadda, yadda.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

tear along the dotted line

WE WANT TO KNOW WHAT YOU THINK

We need your help. Y'see, the only way to keep improving the WIZARD price guide is to keep in touch with the thousands of comic book fans that make this industry what it is. So, we need you to take a couple of minutes and fill out the survey on the left and mail this page to us. And heck, by helping us make a better mag, you'll *get* a better mag! (See? it all works out in the end.) Oh, and feel free to photocopy this page if you don't feel like destroying this issue.

WHO ARE YOU?

Name (please print)

Address

City State

Zip Age

e-mail address (if you got one)

MAIL SURVEY TO:

Jon R. Warren
c/o WIZARD P.G. Surveys
2401 Broad St.
Chattanooga, TN 37408
e-mail: JonRWarren@aol.com

ABOUT THE PRICE GUIDE

GRADING COMICS BY CONDITION

All prices listed in this guide are for Near Mint (NM) condition.

When your comic isn't Near Mint, you can compute the price based on the percentages shown to the left. Now, keep in mind that one person's Mint is another's Near Mint. And many things can factor into grading a comic's value: its age, the supply and demand for the various grades, retailer location, local availability of a title, its current popularity, and most importantly, what specific condition the comic is in. *"Dammit, Jim, I'm a doctor, not a comic grader!"* Hey, relax. We'll not only show you how to use this price guide, but how to grade your comics too. Just read along and before you know it, you'll be able to dazzle your dates with all sorts of hip comic lingo.

It might help if you grade comics on a 10-point scale, with 10 being perfect and 1 being lousy.

MINT (M): An almost perfect 9.8 to 10 on a 10-point scale, *yin libro muy guapo!* To be Mint, a comic must appear absolutely like the day it was printed, with no nicks, dings or creases. It's gotta be clean as a whistle. Corners are perfectly sharp without a tear or shred, the colors are crystal clear, the cover gloss is still there and even the *friggin' staples* are perfect. Many comics produced today fall short of Mint standards. Remember, no imperfections may be allowed in a Mint comic. Mint comics usually sell for 125 to 150 percent of price guide listings. Comics published after 1970 in Mint condition are closer to the Near Mint price, since many exist in Mint condition.

NEAR MINT (NM): A 9 on a 10-point scale. Just a notch or two below perfect. It might appear to be Mint, but upon close inspection, tiny flaws can be detected. The gloss and color are outstanding. Comics in this condition should do any collection proud, unless you're some weird, anal comic perfectionist. All prices in this guide are for Near Mint copies, and are 100 percent of price guide listings.

VERY FINE (VF): A 7 on a scale of 10. This is clean and sharp in every way and at first glance may appear Near Mint. At closer range, however, you'll notice minor signs of use. VF comics are 70 percent of guide listings.

FINE-VERY FINE (FVF): A 6 outta 10. Fine-Very Fine books are above-average, clean, bright copies lacking the crispness associated with VF. Pages may be slightly yellow, but not brown or brittle. Several tiny stress lines along the spine or covers may be expected, and several tiny color flakes are permitted. No subscription creases or spine rolls are allowed in this grade. Corners may be slightly rounded, but exceptional cover gloss remains. Fine-Very Fine books go for 50 percent of price guide listings.

FINE (FN): This rates a 5 out of 10. Fine books are slightly better than average with obvious signs of wear, but are still clean and bright without major creasing. Fine books go for 40 percent of price guide listings.

VERY GOOD (VG): A whopping 3 out of 10. Average, at best. Very Good comics appear used, but not abused. They have creases and minor tears. Very Good books go for 15-25 percent of guide listings.

GOOD (G), FAIR (FR) and POOR (P): All are 1 or less out of 10. These books...suck. They are considered below average and heavily worn. These are the comics that have been read and re-read without regard to preservation. Good books go for 10 percent of price guide listings. Fair books can have loose pages or pieces missing from the cover and sell for 3 percent of price guide listings. Poor books can have missing covers, pages, etc. These books are really sorry, and they go for 1 percent of price guide listings.

The **WIZARD** guide contains the most accurate and up-to-minute comic book prices available on the planet. To ensure that our values are as timely as possible, we constantly communicate with our ever-expanding network of comic book retailers and regularly send scouts to check prices in stores and at shows throughout the country. Keep in mind that the Price Guide is only a guide; prices may vary depending on the local availability and popularity of a title.

HOW TO USE THE PRICE GUIDE

It's easy, and best of all, you can learn at home. The price guide is arranged alphabetically by title. Listings for trade paperbacks, annuals, one-shots and graphic novels are found after the regular listing for a title, and are likewise listed alphabetically. When a title has been used several times for different series, like *Legion of Super-Heroes*, we list all series under that title chronologically.

When a book has changed in value since last month's listing, it's shaded by either a red or blue bar. If the comic has risen in value, it's marked by a red bar. If it has fallen in value, it's marked by a blue bar. Every new issue and/or title listing is marked by a green bar. A yellow bar indicates an issue that is experiencing heavy market trading activity, but has not changed in value since last issue.

In the example shown below, ***Action Comics* #684** is a comic being listed for the first time, ***Action Comics* #267** has risen since last month, ***Action Comics* #661** has dropped in value since last month, and ***Action Comics* #686** has been selling like ebola-infested monkeys without any fluctuation in price. (Actually, ebola-infested monkeys probably wouldn't sell very well, so they're a bad example. Let's just say that comics with yellow bars are really hot.)

ALPHABETICAL ARRANGEMENT

After skipping articles "A," "An," and "The" at the beginning of a title, alphabetization is word by word, not letter by letter. So, "The Amazing Spider-Man" is listed under "Amazing," and "The Astonishing X-Men" is listed under "Astonishing;" "Batman: Sword of Azrael" comes before "Batman: The Animated Movie" because we include the article "The" in alphabetizing when it occurs as an interior part of the title. Using the one-word-at-a-time approach, all titles starting with the word "Blood," including "Blood Syndicate," are used up before we go on to titles such as "Bloodfire/Hellina" and "Bloodshot." Abbreviations such as "Dr." will be found before titles starting with "Dragon" but after titles starting with "Doctor." Numeric titles such as "2099 A.D." will be listed as alphabetically as if the numeral were spelled out as "Two thousand ninety-nine."

PRICING YOUR COMICS

All prices listed in this guide are for Near Mint (NM) condition. When your comic isn't Near Mint, you compute the price based on the percentages shown below. Keep in mind this is only a guide, and percentages can vary depending on several factors, including age, supply and demand for the various grades, retailer location, local availability of a title and its current popularity.

MINT (M) 125-150% of price listed. Comics after 1970 in Mint should be priced at the Near Mint price, since Mint copies are not unusual for comics after 1970.
NEAR MINT (NM) 100% of price listed
VERY FINE (VF) 70% of price listed (75-80% for pre-1970 books)
FINE-VERY FINE (FVF) 50% of price listed
FINE (FN) 40% of price listed
VERY GOOD (VG) 15-25% of price listed
GOOD (G) 10% of price listed
FAIR (FR) 3% of price listed
POOR (P) 1% of price listed

REFERENCES

1:	First Appearance of	M:	Married
anniv:	Anniversary issue	O:	Origin
A:	Appearance	p:	part #
B:	Begin stories with	PF:	Prestige Format
C:	Comics that pre-dates 1	Q:	Quits
cvr:	Cover	R:	Return of
D:	Death/Destruction of	SC:	Softcover
GN:	Graphic Novel	sz:	Size
HC:	Hardcover	TPB:	Trade Paperback
IR:	Identity revealed	w/:	With
J:	Joins	w/o:	Without
L:	Last story with		

HERE'S A SAMPLE!

creator abbreviations

AAd Art Adams
AAl Adam Blaustein
ACa Anthony Castrillo
ACo Amanda Conner
ACh Anthony Chen
ADa Alan Davis
ADr Arnold Drake
ADv Al Davison
AFo Alan Dean Foster
AGa Alex Garner
AGd Alan Gordon
AGi Alessandro Gil
AGo Archie Goodwin
AGr Alan Grant
AHe Andrew Helfer
AKa Art Kokomb
AHu Adam Hughes
AKb Andy Kubert
AKp Alex Kupperberg
AKu Adam Kubert
AKw Alex Kwitney
ALa Andy Lanning
Ale Alexeno
ALp Aaron Lopresti
AMe Amy Mengels
AMc Angus McKie
AMe Angel Medina
AMi Al Milgrom
AMo Alex Morse
ANi Art Nichols
ANo Ann Nocenti
AOl Ariel Olivetti
APn Arnold Pander
APo Adam Pollina
ARo Arthur Roeser
ARu Alex Ross
ASd Alex Sorokin
ASm Andy Smith
ASp Art Spiegelman
ASt Alex Stevens
ATh Art Thibert
ATo Alex Toth
AVa Andrew Vachss
AWe Alan Weiss
AWi Al Williamson
AWl Anthony Williams
AWm Andrew Wildman
AWo Ashley Wood
AWs Arno Wiesenfeld
BAn Brent Anderson
BAu Brian Augustyn
BBd Brad Bleeding
BBl Bret Blevins
BBo Brian Bolland
BCh Bernard Chang
BCo Brandon Choi
BDa Bart Davis
BDe Ben Dunn
BEv Bill Everett
BFe Bob Fernandez
BFo Brian Fitch
BH Bob Hall
BHa Bill Hampton
BHe Brian Hetrick
BHy Bob Hanley
BJo Bruce Jones
BKa Bob Kane
BKe Barbara Kesel
BKi Barry Kitson
BLa Bob Layton
BLi Bill Liebig
BLs Burton Lash
BMa Bill Mantlo
BMc Bob McLeod
BMi Brandon McKinney
BMo Bill Morrison
BMu Bernie Mireault
BMs Bill Maus
BMt Brandon McCarthy
BNe Bob Neptune
BOc Brian O'Connell
BPe Bruce Patterson
BPo Brendan Petersen
BPr Bob Powell
BPr Bruno Premiani
BPu Brian Pulido
BRa Barbara Randall
BRd Bradley C. Reader
BRo Bob Rozakis
BSe Bart Sears
BSi Bill Sienkiewicz
BSm Barry Windsor-Smith
BSt Beau Smith
BTa Bryan Talbot
BTi Bruce Timm
BTu Billy Tucci
BTz Kelly Tucci
BUz Buzz
BWi Bob Wiacek
BWl Bill Willingham
BWr Berni Wrightson
BWt Brian Witten
CAd Charlie Adlard
CBa Gary Bates
CBu Chris Bachalo
CBl Chris Batista
CCa Claudio Castellini
CCl Chris Claremont
CDa Craig Davidson
CDi Chuck Dixon
CDo Colleen Doran
CEz Carlos Ezquerra
CGa Carlos Garzon
CGi Chris Gilles
CHa Cully Hamner
CKe Cam Kennedy
CLa Clifford Lawrence
CLb Cortney Lehmkuhl
CMa Christopher Mueller
CMc Cary Nord
CPa Carlos Pacheco
CPl Chuck Planer
CPo Carl Potts
CPr Christopher Priest
CSp Chris Sprouse
CSt Chris Stone
CSw Curt Swan
CTr Chris Troy
CUl Chris Ulm
CVe Cindy Vance
CWa Charles Vess
CWe Chris Warner
CWi Chris Williams (Omega)
CWl Chuck Wojtkiewicz
CWt Chance Wolfe
CWv Chris Warnock
CYo Chop Yoop
DAb Dusty Abell
DAd Dan Adkins
DAn David Aronsenson
DAr Darick Anson
DAt Don Atchett
DAv David Mack
DAy Dick Ayers
DBe Don Berry
DBr Dave Brewer
DBs Dave Bossom
DBu Daniel Burcham
DCa Don Cameron
DCh Dan Chichester
DCl Daniel Clowes
DCo Dave Cockrum
DCp Dave Cooper
DCw Dennis Cowan
DDa David Day
DDe David DeVries
DDi Dick Dillin
DDo Dave Dorman
DDr Don Dowe
DDv Don Dev
DFe Dominic Fegredo
DFi Denny Fingerath
DFr Dan Frazier
DGb Dave Gibbons
DGi Dick Giordano
DGr Dennis Grow
DGs David Gross
DHa Drew Hayes
DHe Don Heck
DHo Dave Hoover
DJa Dennis Janke
DJo Dave Johnson
DJr Don Jurgens
DKa Dale Keown
DLa Don Lawler
DLp David Lapham
DMa Doug Mahnke
DMo Doug Moench
DMz Don Mitchell
DMt Dean Motter
DMu Doug Murray
DNe Don Newton
DOe Dark Dee
DOn Dennis O'Neil
DPa Don Panosian
DPe Dan Perlin
DPo Doug Potter
DQu David Quinn
DRa Dave Ramson
DRb Derrick Robertson
DRo Dave Rosen
DSa Dave Sim
DSl Don Slott
DSp Don Spiegle
DSs Dan Simonson
DSt Dave Stevens
DTa Dwayne Turner
DVa Dan Vado
DVm Dev Madan
DWe David Wenzel
DWt David Wilkins
EBa Eduardo Barreto
EBe Ed Benes
EBi Edwin Biukovic
EBl E. Nelson Bridwell
ECa Eddie Campbell
ECo Ernie Colon
EDe Even Dorkin
EHe Ed Hannigan
EHi Everette Hartsoe
ELa Eric Larsen
ELo Elena Lo
ELu Eric Luke
ELu Eric Lindbloom
EMa Ethan Mangum
EMe Esteban Maroto
FSh Eric Shanower
ESu Eric Sulevitch
ESp Eric Stephenson
FBr Frank Brunner
FC Frank Cho
FHe Flint Henry
FLa Fabian Lugund
FMi Frank Miller
FNi Fabian Nicieza
FPe Faye Perovich
FRa Francisco
FRo Frank Robbins
FSp Frank Springer
FTa Frank Takenaga
GAm Gary Amaro
GCh Gary Cohn
GCo Gene Colan
GCp Greg Capullo
GCy Gerry Conway
GDo Geof Darrow
GDv Guy Davis
GEa Garth Ennis
GEr Gerhard
GEs Gary Erskine
GFa Glenn Fabry
GFk Gary Frank
GFr George Freeman
GFo Gordon Fox
GFx Greg Fox
GGe Gabe Gecko
GGI Gary Gianni
GHa Gene Ha
GHe Gilbert Hernandez
GIb Geof Isherwood
GIn Gerard Jones
GKa Gil Kane
GLa Greg LaRocque
GMo Grant Morrison
GMr Guy Morrow
GNa Go Nagai
GNo Graham Nolan
GPe George Perez
GPo Gordon Purcell
GRa Gray
GTa George Tuska
GWr Gregory Wright
HCh Howard Chaykin
HEi Harlan Ellison
HFi Hart D. Fisher
HHo Howard Hoskin
HMc Harvey Mercado-Nonesio
HPe Harvey Pekar
HPo Howard Porter
HRo Humberto Ramos
HSn Howard Simpson
HTr Herb Trimpe
HWe Howard Weinstein
ICh Ian Churchill
IEd Ian Edgington
IKo Igor Kordey
INo Ivo Novick
IPe Ivan Velez Jr.
JAr Jeff Albrecht
JAl Jim Aparo
JAr John Arcudi
JBe Joe Bennett
JBg Jon Bogdanove
JBy Jerry Bingham
JBl Jim Balent
JBm John Broome
JBo John Bolton
JBr June Brigman
JBt Jeff Butler
JBu John Buscema
JBy John Byrne
JBz Joe Brozowsky
JCa Joey Cavalieri
JCd Joe Chiodo
JCe Jim Calafiore
JCg Johnny Craig
JCo Scott Campbell
JCr Jon Choiceca
JCy John Cleary
JCz John Czop
JDe Jose Delbo
JDe Jamie Delano
JDn John Dixon
JDe Al DeMatteis
JDu Julie Doucet
JDr Jim Dourseme
JDu Jo Duffy
JEs John Estes
JFl John Van Fleet
JFm John Francis Moore
JFr John Freeman
JFr James Fry III
JGo Jorge González
JGo Joel Gomez
JGu Jackson Guice
JHc Jack C. Harris
JHd John Dell
JHn James Hewlett
JHt John Higgins
JHu Jim Hudnall
JHz Jaime Hernandez
JJa James Jadwal
JJe Jeff Jensen
JJm Joseph A. James
JJn J.D. Jones
JJo Jeff Johnson
JJs Jose Justiniano
JJu Joe Justus
JKi Jack Kirby
JKu Joe Kubert
JLa Jim Lawson
JLi Joseph Michael Linsner
JLu John Paul Leon
JLz José Luis García-López
JMa John Maneely
JMd Joe Maneely
JMi Jeff Mariotte
JMk Joseph M. Marks
JMo Jim Mooney
JMr John McCrea
JMs Jeff Mariotte
JMt Joe Matt
JMu Jon J. Muth
JMy Jeffrey May
JOb James O'Barr
JOd Joe Orlando
JOe Joe Benitez
JOl Jon Sims
JOo James Owen
JOr Jerry Ordway
JOs John Ostrander
JOw Jim Owsley
JPe James Pascoe
JPe Jonathan Peterson
JPh Joe Phillips
JPl Jon St. Pierre
JPm Jimmy Palmiotti
JPo Jacob Pander
JPo Jarrod Pasi
JPr Jerry Prosser
JPs Jason Pearson
JQu Joe Quesada
JRa Jordan Raskin
JRb James Robinson
JRe John Ney Rieber
JRi John Ridgway
JRo John Romita Jr.
JRy John Riley
JSa Jason Sacks
JSc Jason Scott
JSe John Ross
JSu Joe Rubinstein
JTr Judith Reeves-Stevens
JTy John Tayle
JVa John Verum
JWa John Wagner
JWe Joe Weems
JWh Jonathan Sibal
JWi Jon Wisnod
JWe Joe Westcott
JSg Jerry Siegel
JSh Jim Shooter
JSi Joe Simonti
JDe James Sheehan
JSm James T. Sherman
JSo Jay Solon
JSp Jack Sparling
JSt Jim Shannon
JSv Jewel Saltares
JSz Jim Starlin
JTh John K. Snyder III
JTh Jill Thompson
JTo Joel Thomas
JVa Jim Valentino
JYo James Yonce
JWa John Wagner
JWf Joe Wolfe
JWi J.H. Williams
JWk John Watkiss
JWo Jim Woodring
JWp Jason Walthrip
JWt John Walthrip
JZe Jorge Zaffino
JZo Joe Zabel
JZu Juan Zornoza
JZu Joel Zubasta
KAl Karl Altstaetter
KAu Kevin Altieri
KBa Kyle Baker
KBe Kat Bellinger
KBu Kur Busiek
KDe Kathryn Delaney
KDr Kieron Dwyer
KEa Kevin Eastman
KFu Kazuki Fujiwara
KGa Kerry Gammill
KGi Keith Giffen
KHo Ken Hooper
KHp Kevin Hopgood
KHt Kyle Holtz
KJa Klaus Janson
KJo Kelley Jones
KJv Kirk Jarvinen
KKo Karl Kesel
KKo Kevin Kobasik
KLn Kirk Lindo
KLe Ken Lackey
KMa Kevin Maguire
KNo Kevin Nowlan
KOs Kevin O'Neill
KOt Katsuhiko Otomo
KPl Kilian Plunkett
KPo Keith Pollard
KPu Kelley Puckett
KSc Kurt Schaffenberger
KSt Ken Steacy
KVh Kevin Vanhook
KWe Kevin West
KWi Kent Williams
KWl Keith Wilson
KWm Kirk Van Wormer
KWr Kate Worley
KYo Kim Yale
LAl Laura Allred
LBa Larry Marder
LDe Lee Daniels
LEl Lee Elias
LHa Larry Hama
LHi Laura Hitchcock
LHr Leo Harrison
LJi Leonardo Jimenez
LKa Lee Kanieski
LKi Lorenzo Kindiarski
LLe Larry Leber
LMc Luke McDonnell
LMd Lee Moder
LMe Linda Medley
LMo Lou Mougin
LNe Lee Weeks
LPe Linda Perlstein
LPo Lou Roberts
LRo Luke Ross
LSa Liam Sharp
LSe Laurie Sorenson
LSm Louis Small Jr.
LSt Larry Stroman
LSu Lee Sullivan
LSz Lee Szarzewski
LWa James Waldron
LWe Len Wein
LWk Lee Weeks
MAd Michael Adams
MAh Marc Hansen
MAl Michael Allred
MAn Murphy Anderson
MAq Mark Aldquest
MAt Mat Broome
MBa Mark Bagley
MBd Mark Badger
MBe Mike Beaulieu
MBl Michael Bair
MBn Mary Bertkum
MBo Mike Bocharty
MBr Mike Dringenberg
MBu Michael Dutkiewicz
MEg Marty Egeland
MEm Martin Emond
MEr Marc Erickson
MEu Michael Eury
MEv Marc Evanier
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MHa Mike Harris
MHe Michael Hernandez
MHi Michael Higgins
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MHo Matt Howarth
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MHy Matt Haley
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MKz Mike Kazaleh
MLa Mike D. Lawrence
MLe Mike Lackey
MLi Mike Lieber
MLo Michael Lark
MLy Mike Mayhew
MMc Mike McKenzie
MMi Marc Mitchell
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MNa Mike Nasser
MNe Mike Necese
MNf Mark A. Nelson
MNw Mandy Newell
MOe Mike Oeser
MOs Montana Oshii
MPa Marvin Packs
MPc Mark Pacella
MPn Mark Pennington

MPl	Mike Ploog	PMo	Paul Kupperberg	RSi	Roger Stern	TAk	Tony Akins
MPm	Mark Pennington	PMz	Peter Laird	RTo	Romeo Tanghal	TAr	Tom Artin
MPn	Martin Powell	PNa	Paul Levitz	RTh	Roy Thomas	TAu	Terry Austin
MPr	Mike Parobek	PNb	Pablo Marcos	RTi	R.G. Taylor	TBa	Terry Beatty
MRa	Mark Ruiberts	PNi	Patrick McDonn	RVe	Rick Veitch	TBo	Tom Bierbaum
MRc	Mike Richardson	PNk	Pop Mhan	RVi	Ricardo Villagran	TBr	Tom Brevoort
MRo	Marshall Rogers	PNo	Peter Hallgon	RWa	Ron Wagner	TCa	Tony Caputo
MRs	Marshall Rosa	PNo	Pat Mills	RWh	Rod Whigham	TCh	Travis Charest
MRu	[illegible]	PNu	Paul Neary	RWi	Ron Wilson	TCk	Tarren Colver
MRy	Matt Ryan	PNu	Phyllis Novin	RWl	Rob Walton	TCo	Terry Collins
MSa	Mike Sagara	PNu	Philip Nutman	RWs	Robert L. Washington III	TCr	Tom Christopher
MSc	Matthias Schultheiss	POd	Peter O'Donnell	SAp	Sheo Anton Pensa	TDa	Tony Daniel
MSe	Marie Severin	POl	Pat O'Neill	SAr	Sergio Aragonés	TDa	Tom DeFalco
MSh	Mark Schultz	PPa	Paul Pelletier	SBc	Steve Buccellato	TDg	Todd DeZago
MSi	Mari Silvestri	PPe	Paul Pope	SBe	Scott Benefiel	TDo	Terry Dodson
MSm	Mark Silvestri	PPa	Pat Redding	SBi	Simon Bisley	TDr	Tom Derenick
MSo	Mariamne Shirow	PRi	Pino Rinaldi	SBk	Stan Berkowitz	TDz	Tony DeZuniga
MSs	Mary Skrenes	PRy	Paul Ryan	SBe	Scott Benson	TEa	Trevor Van Eaden
MSt	Mark Stegbauer	PSa	Peter Sanderson	SBh	Stephen Bissette	TEl	Tim Eldred
MTa	Mike Taylor	PSm	Paul Smith	SBt	Steve Butler	TEg	Tom Grindberg
MTe	Mari Tenene	PSn	Peter Snejbjerg	SBu	Sal Buscema	TGr	Tom Grummett
MTh	Mike Thibodeaux	PSt	Peter Stone	SBy	Sarah E. Byam	THa	Tony Harris
MTk	Mutsuki Tanaka	PTh	Pamela Thibert	SCa	Steven Carr	THl	Ted Hebert
MTp	Mark Teppey	PWi	Paul Wiscover	SCb	Sean Chen	TIh	Tetsuya Ishida
MTu	Michael Turner	PWe	Phil Winslade	SCi	Sergio Ciriello	TIs	Tony Isabella
MVa	Mark Verheiden	PZ	Patrick Zircher	SCl	Scott Clark	TJh	Ted Johnson
MVo	Mike Vosburg	RAn	Ross Andru	SCl	Scott Lee	TKa	Terry Kavanagh
MWa	Mari Wagner	RAr	Renato Arlem	SCo	Steve Crespo	TKl	Todd Klein
MWb	Mike W. Barr	RAs	Richard Ashford	SCs	Sandy Carruthers	TKn	Dave Kaminga
MWd	Mark Wade	RBa	Ricardo Barreto	SDa	Steve Dillon	TKr	Teddy H. Kristiansen
MWe	Mari Weldt	RBe	Richard Bennett	SDu	Steve Dillon	TKy	Tom Kyffin
MWh	Mark Wheatley	RBo	Brian Bolland	SEa	Scott Eaton	TLa	Terry LaBan
MWi	Mary Wilshire	RBo	Robert Boyd	SEd	Scott Edelman	TLe	Tom Lyle
MWo	Mike Wolfinger	RBr	Russel Brown	SEi	Steven Ellis	TLo	Tom Lorh
MWr	Mike Worunge	RBu	Rick Buckler	SEm	Steve Engelhart	TLy	Tom Lyle
MWs	Michael Weissman	RBu	Robert Burden	SEp	Steve Epting	TMa	Tom Mandrake
MWy	M. Wyatt	RBy	Reggie Byers	SEs	Steve Ernst	TMc	Todd McFarlane
MZe	Mark Zeelt	RCa	Richard Case	SFa	Samuel Fassman	TMk	Ted McKeever
MZv	Marcus Zaldi	RC	Ramon Contreras	SGd	Tom Grindberg	TMo	Tom Morgan
NAb	Neil Abbott	RCo	R.A. Corona	SGe	Steve Gerber	TMr	Terry Moore
NAd	Neal Adams	RC	Roger Cruz	SGg	Steve Geppi	TMy	Tom McCraw
NBa	Ned Bernard	RDe	Rich Dekozlowski	SGi	Sam Glanzman	TNg	Ted Naifeh
NBi	Norm Breyfogle	RDi	Fernando Delgado	SGo	Sam Gorodetsky	TNg	Takashi Nagayama
NCa	Nick Cardy	RDm	Robert Dominguez	SGr	Steve Gerber	TNo	Todd Nauck
NCe	Norman Cebulski	REi	Alex Eisner	SGr	Steve Geppi	TOc	Thomas O'Connor
NEu	N. Everett	REl	Robert Elmendorf	SHa	Sam Hamm	TOr	Trevor Orlando
NGo	Nigel Goldsmith	RFe	Rich Fender	SHe	Steve Henderson	TPe	Tom Peyer
NGw	Norm Gwynn	RFr	Ron Frenz	SHm	Scott Hampton	TRa	Tom Ramey
NEl	Nelson	RGa	Tom Gianni	SHo	Steve Horgan	TRb	Trigo Robbins
NFe	Norman Fedder	RGd	Richard Gordon	SHr	Scott Hershman	TRy	Tom Ryder
NGa	Nick Gamble	RGe	Ken Gemes	SIa	Scott Isaacs	TSa	Tim Sale
NGi	Nando Giménez	RGr	Tom Grindberg	SJa	Sam Jaffe	TSg	Tom Smegeski
NHa	Neil Harrison	RGu	Robert Guillatt	SJe	Steve Jerome	TSh	Terry Shoemaker
NMa	Nathan Massengill	RHa	Alex Hamilton	SJi	Steve Jiménez	TSl	Ted Slampyak
NNo	Nick Napoleoni	RHe	Ed Hannigan	SJo	Steve Leialoha	TSm	Tom Smith
NPa	Nick Pelley	RHo	Rich Horwedel	SJu	Sam Humphries	TSn	Tom Sutton
NSh	N. Steven Harris	RHw	Bernard Hrusewski	SLe	Steve Leialoha	TSt	Tim Stimpson
NVi	Nick Vince	RJh	Lee Johnson	SLo	Steve Lavoie	TTi	Terry Tidwell
OCa	Octavio Cariello	RJo	Robert Jones	SLt	Steve Leialoha	TTo	Tom Tenney
OIs	Oliver Isabedra	RJo	R.A. Jones	SLu	Sal Lunella	TTr	Timothy Tremon
OLo	Oscar Gonzalez Loyo	RKa	Robert Kanigher	SLy	Steve Lightle	TTu	Todd Tuttle
OZa	Oscar Zarate	RKy	Robert Kayanan	SMa	Scott Mandell	TVo	Tom Veitch
PAr	Patrick Lee	RLa	Robert Lefebvre	SMi	Val Mayerik	TWi	Tim Vigil
PBa	Paul Lee	RLe	Rick Leach	SMm	Shawn Mamankough	TWo	Terl S. Wood
PBe	Phillip Bond	RLd	Rob Liefeld	SMc	Sean McLaughlin	TYe	Tom Yeates
PBr	Pat Broderick	RLm	Rick Leonardi	SMd	Sean McDermott	YB	Yo Bridges
PCh	Paul Chadwick	RL	Ron Lim	SMi	Steve Miller	YGi	Vince Giarrano
PCo	Pete Constanza	RLo	R.J.M. Lofficier	SMl	Scott McCloud	YLo	Vince Locke
PCr	P. Craig Russell	RLu	Ralph Lumley	SMo	Shelly Moldoff	YMa	Val Mayerik
PCu	Pam Cullers	RLv	Rick Levins	SMy	Steve McManus	YRu	Vince Russell
PDa	Peter David	RMa	Ralph Macchio	SPa	Steve Parkhouse	YSa	Yal Sarnalia
PDi	Paul Dini	RMc	Roger McKenzie	SPe	Scott Perdue	WBo	Wayne Boring
PDo	Peter Doherty	RMi	Russ Manning	SPh	Sean Phillips	WEi	Will Eisner
PDr	Paul Dormer	RMm	Roland Mann	SPi	Scott Phillips	WEl	Warren Ellis
PDu	Paul Duncan	RMo	Rags Morales	SPr	Stefan Petrucha	WLe	Will Lerche
PEd	Pedi	RMz	Guy Allen Martinez	SPt	Stephen Platt	WLo	William Marvel-Loeb
PFe	Pascual Ferry	RMy	Rich Mays	SPu	Steve Pugh	WMo	William Morden
PFo	Pete Ford	RMz	Ron Mertz	SRa	Steve Ramos	WMc	Walter McDaniel
PGe	Phil Gervasone	RNi	Robert Nieves	SRu	Steve Rude	WNo	Will Northner
PGi	Peter Gillis	RPc	Richard Pace	SSa	Sam Salem	WPi	Woody Pirtl
PGo	Paul Guinan	RPh	Rob Phipps	SSc	Sean Scofield	WPl	Warren Plunk
PGr	Peter Gross	RPl	Richard Plot	SSe	Steven T. Seagle	WPo	Walter Porcelio
PGu	Peter Guzzo	RPk	Rick Parker	SSh	Sean Shaw	WRo	Werner Roth
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PHa	Paul Gulacy	RPr	Richard Piers Rayner	SSr	Steve Skroce	WSm	William Simpson
PHe	Philip Nester	RQu	Randy Queen	SSt	Steve Stern	WVa	Wayne Van Sant
PJe	Paul Jenkins	RRa	Ron Randall	SVa	Steve Vance	WWo	Wally Wood
PJi	Phil Jiménez	RSa	Roger Salick	SVa	Sal Velluto	YGu	Yuel Guichet
PJo	Paul Johnson	RSi	Roger Silfer	SWa	Sean Wach	YIa	Yanny Iabat
PKr	Peter Krause	RSy	Randy Strudley	SYa	Steve Yeowell		

CREATOR SPOTLIGHT

Photo courtesy of Terry Ordway

NAME: Terry Ordway
FIRST PRO WORK: Inked a short story in DC Comics' *Mystery in Space #94*
CURRENT WORK: "Writing and painting covers for DC's *The Power of Shazam!* and an eight-page story called 'The Messenger' for Mike Manley's *Action Planet Comics*, which I'm trying to get out on a bimonthly schedule."
DREAM PROJECT: "It fits into what I'm doing with 'The Messenger,' because my ultimate dream project is to do my own characters, like this one character I have called Proton."
HOW I BROKE IN... "I was working in commercial art. It happened that the people I was working for knew I liked comic book stuff, and when they got work through the commercial art studio to do coloring books for Western Publishing, I was put on the project. And that was kind of how I got noticed by DC and Marvel. I did a DC coloring book called *DC Superheroes* with puzzles and games. Then I did a series of four or five of these in a box set for Marvel, [which] had the whole Marvel Universe in it so I got to draw all of their characters. Both of those projects had to go through official approval, and at DC, it was Paul Levitz who had to sign off on having an outside artist do a licensed property. I took these same samples to Chicago in 1980, where DC was doing a talent search, and I waited like everybody else...and it looked hopeless. When I finally got to the front of the line, Joe Orlando was doing the critiquing. As he critiqued me, Paul Levitz walked over and said, 'Terry Ordway? We've been trying to get in touch with you, but we had no way of doing it because of the studio set-up you were working in. Here, give me your number...' And from there, I got my first work." ■ *Matthew Senreich*

the Wizard COMIC Price Guide

ANNIHILATIONS
MARVEL (1998)

1 mini-series; "Future Imperfect" sequel 1.50
2 .50
3 1.50

ANNIHILATION VARIANTS
DC COMICS/VERTIGO (1998)

-SHOT INVISIBLES tale, plus samplings of other Vertigo projects, Preacher 515.00

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FANTAGRAPHICS 1984)

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1A 2nd printing 3.95
2 Quarterly, the Mouse (Edw Kinfield) 4.50
3 digest-size 4.50
3A 2nd printing 4.00
3A 3rd printing 4.00
4 tabloid size; Sparky's Best Comics 5.50
4A 2nd printing 4.95
5-6 4.50
7 7.50
8 4.00

ACTION COMICS
DC COMICS (1938-CURRENT)

0 (8/94) Peer Pressure p4 2.25
©&O:Superman; ©:Joe Lane 75,000.00
2 Origin story p2, Superman nail on cover 25,000.00
3 10,000.00
4-5 6,000.00
6 ©:Jimmy Olsen 6,500.00
7 2nd superman cover 10,000.00
8 (1/39) 4,000.00
9 4,000.00
10 3rd Superman cover 5,500.00
2,650.00
12 superman reset on cover 2,600.00
13 4th superman cover 3,900.00
14 superman reset on cover 1,900.00
15 5th superman cover 3,200.00
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18 500.00
19 Begin Superman covers 2,600.00
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24-31 975.00
32 (7/41) 775.00
33 ©:Lois America 700.00
34-36 700.00
37 ©:Congo Bill 825.00
38-41 700.00
42 ©&O:Vigilante 1,000.00
43 700.00
44 (1/42) 650.00
45-46 650.00
47 1st luthor cover 800.00
48-50 650.00
51 ©:Pied Piper 775.00
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64 ©:Toyman 575.00
65-67 500.00
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80 Mr. Mxyzptlk (1/45) 650.00
80A Special Edition-U.S. Navy giveaway 650.00
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81A special Edition-U.S. Navy giveaway 390.00
82 390.00
83 ©: Heavy and Faces 420.00
84 390.00
84A Special Ed.-U.S. Navy giveaway 390.00
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91 390.00
92 (/46) 390.00
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100 650.00
101-103 350.00
104 (/47) 350.00
105-108 320.00
109-1 375.00
110-1 (1/48) 390.00
117-126 390.00
127 Begin Tommy Tomorrow 390.00
128 (1/49) 290.00
129-150 290.00
151-201 260.00
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243-249 200.00
250 Tommy Tomorrow 200.00
251 ©:Tommy Tomorrow 200.00
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267 ©:Chameleon Boy, Invisible Kid, Colossal Boy 350.00
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276 Mid Wilts Legion 310.00
277-287 [illegible]
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290 Supergirl [illegible]
291 Legion of super Villains 360.00
292-299 [illegible]
300 Mon Bl [illegible]
301-308 Legion, Batman [illegible]
309-320 [illegible]
321-333 [illegible]
334 80 Pg. Giant #G-20 320.00
335-339 [illegible]
340 ©&O:Pariah [illegible]
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347 80 Pg. Giant #G-33 210.00
348-359 [illegible]
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361-372 [illegible]
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384-410 [illegible]
411 (Sw Dike ©:metal Eclipse [illegible]
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419 (Sw Dike ©:Human Target [illegible]
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425 1st/Ad B:Aliens 140.00
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431 (Sw Dike 100 pages [illegible]
433-439 (Sw Dike [illegible]
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552-553 Colonel Jilon [illegible]
554 (Ed Wh dedicated to Joe Shuster & Jerry Siegel [illegible]
555-571 [illegible]
572 (Sw Wild script Cockrum) [illegible]
573-587 [illegible]
588 (Sw Nifle "Last" Superman story, p2 [illegible]
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590-592 1Sy Bl [illegible]
593 1Sy Bl ©:Creatures [illegible]
594 1Sy Bl Metal Men [illegible]
600 1Sy GPe 50th Anniv [illegible]
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DC COMICS (1938-CURRENT)

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43 Sandman story 2,600.00
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46-47 Sandman cover & story 2,700.00
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177-187 230.00
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201-209 300.00
210 ©:Krypto 2,600.00
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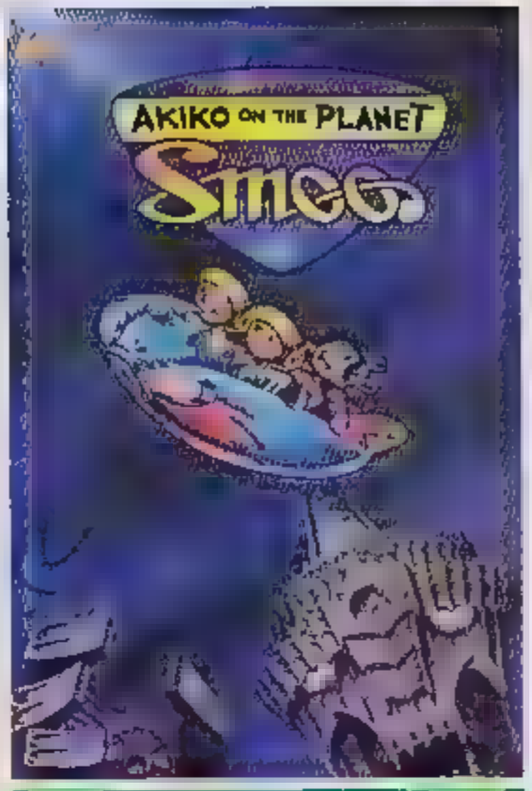
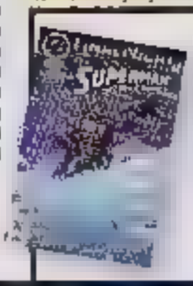


MORE ON THE PLANET SMEG

[illegible] worthy enough to find fame is Akiko, a fourth grader from Garfield in [illegible]



we need it for you

Action Comics #727

With his powers diminishing, cause the son's gone out, Super realizes he's not going to be much good to anyone, so he's about to hang up his cape and tights. But after seeing a vision of himself and realizing that he is a symbol of hope for people everywhere, he fights on with what little strength he has left.

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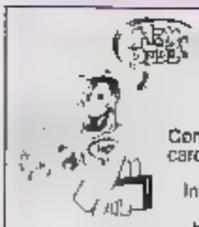

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THE COMIC BOOK LEGAL DEFENSE FUND

Support the CBLDF's efforts to protect the First Amendment Rights of all comic book professionals. Send donations to: PO Box 693, Northampton, MA 01061 or call (800) 992-2533 for a free copy of BUSTED!, the CBLDF newsletter

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Three books containing over 600 step by step illustrations will teach you to draw men, women, monsters, buildings, including a section on creating your own comic book. *Book 1*, *Book II* and *Supermonsters* are $5.95 each. The complete set is only $ 5.95. Learn or your money back. Send check or M.O. to
E. PHELPS COMPANY
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Shows & Conventions

These listings are as accurate as we can get 'em, but *Wizard* always recommends phoning ahead before you attend an event—show information sometimes changes after we go to press. With that in mind, it's time for all you comic-hungry hordes to go conventioneering!

CALIFORNIA

FEBRUARY 22-23, SAN FRANCISCO

COMICS, TOYS & COLLECTIBLES SUPER BLOW-OUT SALE & EXPO, Cow Palace (lower exhibit hall—Gate 5) Geneva & Santos. 50 tables @ $160 each, $5 admission, children under 6 free (bring this issue of Wizard and receive $1 off, one per person—photocopies accepted). 10am-5pm both days. This expo will feature Golden, Silver & Modern comics, toys, animation, Magic: The Gathering (tournament & open gaming), non-sports, Star Wars, Star Trek memorabilia and more. This show includes a SUPER SALE, individual collectors, retailers and exhibitors will be blowing out their personal collections and clearing out their inventory (old & new comics and toys) at INSANE prices. Private collectors, first time exhibitors and retailers are encouraged to participate. Call our hotline for guest and program updates. Program subject to change. Contact, Bill Lee, Expo Hot Line @ 415-522-3838 for details or e-mail: <geomancer@earthlink.net>

DELAWARE

FEBRUARY 16, WILMINGTON

TRI-STATE COMIC CON, Radisson Hotel Rt. 202 next to Concord Mall from I-95 exit 8 North (head towards West Chester). 1st table $70 each, $65 each additional. $3 admission, 11am-4pm. Buy, sell or trade with the areas finest Comic, Toy, Video, Non-sport & Gaming card & Original Art dealers. Hourly door prizes to be given away as well as a special mystery grand prize at 3:30pm. Special guests: JLA and JLX's John Dell & Howard Porter others TBA. Call for additional guest list. Contact: Tri-State Comics @ 302-529-7422 for additional details

FLORIDA

MARCH 15-16, ORLANDO

MEGACON '97, Orange County Convention Center 9800 International Dr., $12 admission for one day. $20 for two days, 10am-8pm. The largest convention in the Southeast. MegaCon features over 100 guests and professionals. Special guests include: Batt, Peter Chung (creator of "Aeon Flux"), Tony Daniel, Dark One, Peter David, Jack Gray, Robb Horan, Steven Hughes, Jason Jensen, Josue Justiniano, Ray Lago, Joe Madureira, Moebius, Shelly Moldoff, George Perez, Brandon Peterson, Brian Pulido, Humberto Ramos, John Romita Sr., Julius Schwartz, Al Simmons, J. Michael Straczynski (creator of "Babylon 5"), Tim Townsend, William Tucci, plus The Warrior. MANY more guests to be announced. Hundreds of dealers, publishers and exhibits! Activities include panel discussions, lots of gaming, animation room, slide shows, publisher presentations and much more. For more information call Skyline Promotions @ 407-509-0905.

MARCH 16, ORLANDO

JOHNCON, Orlando Marriot-International Drive, 1 mile East of the Orlando Convention Center at the intersection of International Drive and Sand Lake Rd., $1 admission, 9am-6pm. Prepare yourself for the largest johncon ever! Over 500 boxes of comics to be blown out at cheap, cheap, cheap prices or even less depending on how much you purchase. Add silver age toys, game cards, small press publishers and a Magic Tournament. We've got the makings for the best johncon ever! Join us and enjoy one of the most unique comic shows around. For more information call Orlando's oldest comic book warehouse store, the Grant Comic Book Warehouse @ 407-695-1953.

ILLINOIS

FEBRUARY 2 & MARCH 2, OAK LAWN

COMICS AND MORE SHOW, Fatima K of C, 5830 W. 95th St. 8ft. tables @ $25 each. $1 admission, 9am-3pm, setup: 8am-9am, Free Parking. We'll feature toys, comics, sports and non-sports cards, action figures, publications and GAMES STUFF!!! Contact: John Leary @ 708-423-1758

FEBRUARY 16, PALATINE

COMIC BOOK & ACTION FIGURE SHOW, Ramada Hotel, Northwest Hwy & Route 53. 60 tables @ $30-$35 each, $2 admission, children under 13 FREE. 9:30am-3pm. We'll feature Comics, Action Figures, Starting Lineups, Star Wars, Star Trek, Sports cards, G.I. Joe, Matchbox, Hot Wheels, Non-Sports cards, hard to find items and much, much more. For more information contact: Keith Boyer @ WP Promotions (847) 776-02 6

FEBRUARY 16 & MARCH 16, ITASCA

Comix Etc., COMIC, TOY, NON-SPORTS CARD & CCG EXTRAVAGANZA, Nordic Hills Resort, 1 mile West of Rt. 53 on Swift Rd. 60 dealer tables available @ $40 each or 2 for $70, $2 admission (children 12 & under FREE!!!), 9:30am-4pm. We'll be featuring 1,000s of comics & toys including Star Wars, X-Men, Spawn and many more. Included in the days events will be a Star Wars Tournament & Sanctioned Magic Tournament. Also sign up for an arena style Mirage Booster Draft (cost of boosters included in entry fee). For more information contact: Tim @ 8 5-729-4019 or Mark, Hey Dude Comics @ 708-686-0171

FEBRUARY 23 & MARCH 23, ORLAND PARK

COMICS AND MORE SHOW. Civic Center one block west of LaGrange Rd. at 147th Street. 6ft. tables @ $30 each or 2 for $55, $1 admission, 9am-3pm, set-up: 7:30-9am. We'll feature comics, toys, non-sports and sports cards, memorabilia, action figures plus free open games including Magic and Star Wars. Contact: John Leary @ 708-423-1758.

IOWA

MARCH 1, BETTENDORF

COMIC SALE, Holiday Inn, $ admission, 9am-3pm. Featuring Comics, Non-Sports Card Show, Milkcaps, Hot Wheels, Collectible Toys and Racing related items. For more information call 319-893-6605

LOUISIANA

FEBRUARY 16, LAFAYETTE

COMIC AND CARD CONVENTION. Holiday Inn Holidome, 2032 N.E. Evangeline Thruway, 20 tables @ $45 each, $1.50 admission, 10am-5pm. Door prize drawings every 30 minutes for comics and cards. Free pack of comic cards with ad and paid admission. Contact: Mark Hlavinka @ 7 3-293-8676.

FEBRUARY 23, BATON ROUGE

COMIC AND CARD CONVENTION, Radisson Hotel, I-10 at the College Drive exit. 35 tables @ $55 each, $1.50 admission, 10am-5pm. Door prize drawings every 30 minutes with a $100 spending spree at 4:30pm. Show us your Wizard and receive a free pack of comic cards with paid admission. Contact: Mark Hlavinka @ 713-293-8676.

MARYLAND

FEBRUARY 9, GLEN BURNIE

JUBILEE'S COMIC BOOK, TOYS AND NON-SPORTS CARD SHOW, Holiday Inn (North) 6323 Ritchie Hwy Rt. 2, exit 3A off 695. 1 table $60 each, 2 or more $50 each, $3.50 admission, MENTION THIS WIZARD AD and RECEIVE 50 CENTS OFF THE REGULAR PRICE, 10am-4pm. Dealers will be selling comics, toys, non-sports cards and comic related items. Activities include: 1st 25 people in line will get into the show for $2. Art contest (art drawn at show), cash, prizes and door prize drawings. For information or dealer tables contact: Gayle R. Huey @ 301-292-4587 or Fax 301-203-0159 (ASK FOR OUR FREE CONVENTION CALENDAR).

FEBRUARY 16, TIMONIUM

Comic Book, Non-Sports Cards and Action Figures and Japanese Animation Show Presented by Clandestine Comics. Holiday Inn-Timonium, 2004 Greenspring Dr., take I-695 to I-83N Exit 16 East. Turn right at first light, hotel on the right, 25 tables @ $45 each. $2 admission CHILDREN UNDER 5 ARE FREE. 11AM-4PM. Door prize drawings throughout the day. Special guest artists to be announced. For dealer information contact: Fred Edeson @ 410-730-8093

MARCH 2, BALTIMORE

JUBILEE'S COMIC BOOK, TOYS & NON-SPORTS CARD SHOW. Days Hotel, I-83 exit 17 Timonium. table $60 each, 2 or more $50 each. $3.50 admission. MENTION THIS WIZARD AD and RECEIVE 50 CENTS OFF THE REGULAR PRICE, 10am-4pm. Dealers will be selling comics, toys, non-sports cards and comic related items. Activities include: 1st 25 people in line will get into the show for $2. Art contest (art drawn at show), cash, prizes and door prize drawings. For information or dealer tables contact: Gayle R. Huey @ 30 -292-4587 or Fax 301-203-0 59 (ASK FOR OUR FREE CONVENTION CALENDAR).

MARCH 8, SILVER SPRING (Washington D.C. area)

JUBILEE'S COMIC BOOK, TOYS & NON-SPORTS CARD SHOW, Armory Place, 925 Wayne Avenue. table @ $65 each. 2 table $60 each, 3 tables or more $55. $3.50 admission. MENTION THIS WIZARD AD and RECEIVE 50 CENTS OFF THE REGULAR PRICE, 10am-4pm. Dealers will be selling comics, toys, non-sports cards and comic related items. Activities include: 1st 25 people in line will get into the show for $2. Art contest (art drawn at show), cash, prizes and door prize drawings. For information or dealer tables contact: Gayle R. Huey @ 301-292-4587 or Fax 301-203-0159 (ASK FOR OUR FREE CONVENTION CALENDAR).

MASSACHUSETTS

FEBRUARY 16, BOSTON

NORTHEAST COMIC CON EXPO, The Colonnade Hotel, 120 Huntington Ave., across from the Prudential Center. Call for table and prices, $5 admission (children under 6 are FREE!), 10am-4pm. Confirmed guests include: Matt Broome (Grifter, WildC.A.T.s, DefCon 4), Mark Moraes (X-Force, Rise of Apocalypse), Anthony Gastrillo (X-Force, X-Men '96), Pop Mahn (Ghost Rider, Marvel Fanfare), Keith Williams (Star Wars, Droids, Lobo/Mask), Louis Small Jr. (Vampirella Strikes, Vampirella Annual, Insidious), Caesar (Vampirella Strikes, Vampirella Annual), Jamal Igle (Daredevil/Shi, Tomoe/Witchblade), Million Year Picnic, Gene Ha (Askerision, Adventures of Cyclops and Phoenix). Contact: Shirley Simms, Exodus Entertainment @ 800-888-9051 (pin# 60009 8).

FEBRUARY 16, SOUTH ATTLEBORO

NON SPORT CARDS, COMIC & TOY SHOW, South Attleboro Knights of Columbus Hall, 305 Highland Rt. 123 W, exit 3B off Rt. 95, 59 tables @ $45 each, $3 admission, children always FREE, 10am-4pm. Thousands of comics at low, low, low prices and thousands of single cards too!!! Contact Harry Martin @ 508-359-8611.

NEW JERSEY

FEBRUARY 8, CLIFTON

CLIFTON COMIC BOOK EXPO., Clifton Recreation Center, 232 Main Ave., Rt. 46 to Piaget Ave, right onto Main Ave. 4 blocks on left, corner of Main & Washington. 30 tables @ $40 each, $2 admission, children under 6 & second parent FREE (free comic with paid admission), 10am-4pm. Comics from GA to present, non-sports cards & action figures, hourly door prizes, 2 no minimum bid auctions. Northern New Jersey's longest-running comic book show. Contact: John Paul @ 201-783-0608.

FEBRUARY 23, WAYNE

WAYNE COMIC BOOK EXPO, Wayne Holiday Inn, Rt. 46E Service Rd, or Rt. 23S to Rt. 46E Service Rd. 30 tables @ $55 each, $2 admission, children under 6 & second parent FREE (free comic book with paid admission). 10am-4pm. Comics from GA to present, non-sports cards & action figures, hourly door prizes, 2 no minimum bid auctions. Friendly. Reputable Dealers Only! Contact: John Paul @ 201-783-0608.

MARCH 15-16, SOUTH PLAINFIELD

THE WORLD OF CARDS & COMICS CONVENTIONS, The Middlesex Mall at Hadley & Stelton Rd., over 69 quality 8 ft tables @ $100 on Saturday, $65 on Sunday or $150 for both days. Free admission, Saturday 10am-9:30pm, Sunday 11am-5pm. Comic books, sports and non-sports cards, supplies, artwork, toys, coins, memorabilia and more at one of New Jersey's longest running shows. Quality dealers selling, buying and trading quality merchandise. MAGIC TOURNAMENT BOTH DAYS. Come experience a great show in a great mall. Shop till you drop and not a penny to get in. Visit us once and you'll be back month after month. THANK YOU! Contact: TJ @ 908-968-3886.

NEW YORK

FEBRUARY 23, NEW YORK

COMIC BOOK SHOW, New Yorker Hotel 34th St. & 7th Ave., (2 blocks from Penn Station and Madison Square Garden in Midtown Manhattan) 50 tables, $4 admission, 10am-5pm. The longest-running comic book show in New York (13 YEARS). Featuring the area's best vendors of Modern, Silver and Golden-Age Comics, Toys, Non-Sports Cards, etc. Guest: TBA. Contact: Fred Greenberg Conventions @ (908) 788-6845.

MARCH 8, NEW YORK

THE BIG APPLE COMIC CON, St. Paul's church auditorium, 9th Ave. between 59th & 60th Street. $5 admission, 10am-6pm. Top dealers buying & selling Gold, Silver & Modern comic books, toys, videos & non-sports cards. Tons of giveaways & raffles. Over 50 artists & writers. Special guests to be announced. For fan & dealer info and to get on our mailing list write or call: Big Apple Conventions Inc. 67-53 Woodhaven Blvd. Suite 102, Rego Park, NY 11374, Hotline 718-275-1567, check out our Website: www.digdomdes.com/BIGAPPLE

MARCH 9, NEW YORK

THE NEW YORK TOY FESTIVAL, Marriot East, 525 Lexington Ave. 49th St. $5 admission, 10am-4pm. The NEW YORK TOY FESTIVAL is back, baby! Thousands and thousands of sensational toys are here for you. You know the ones. Those impossible, hard-to-find toys you only read about. STAR WARS, BARBIE, BATMAN, SPAWN, MARVEL SUPERHEROES, STARTING LINEUPS, STAR TREK & TONS MORE. You've just died and gone to Action Figure Heaven! Oh yeah, we've got comics and cards, too. Not to mention more @#/$%* Action Figures!! THE NEW YORK TOY FESTIVAL assumes no responsibility for those of weak health when they freak out over the avalanche of toys given away from the absolute best toy companies! Unbelievable RARE toys! McFarlane Toys, Playmates, Bar-Dal, Kenner, Toy Biz. Hey somebody dial 911, cause this much excitement has got to be illegal! Don't miss the only toy show in the big city, THE NEW YORK TOY FESTIVAL. For more information contact: Max Gottfried @ 718-441-9868 Monday-Saturday 9am-7pm ONLY.

OHIO

FEBRUARY 9 & MARCH 16, COLUMBUS

JUBILEE'S COMIC BOOK, TOYS AND NON-SPORTS CARD SHOW, Holiday Inn (East), 70 & Hamilton Road, exit 107. 1 table $60 each, 2 or more $50 each, $3.50 admission. MENTION THIS WIZARD AD and RECEIVE 50 CENTS OFF THE REGULAR PRICE, 10am-4pm. Dealers will be selling comics, toys, non-sports cards and comic related items. Activities include: 1st 25 people in line will get into the show for $2. Art contest (art drawn at show), cash, prizes and door prize drawings. For information or dealer tables contact: Gayle R. Huey @ 301-292-4587 or Fax 301-203-0159 (ASK FOR OUR FREE CONVENTION CALENDAR).

MARCH 2, COLUMBUS

BUCKEYE COMIC CON, Holiday Inn West, I-270 at exit 10 Roberts Rd. 40 tables @ $55 each, $3 admission, children 6 & under FREE. 10am-4pm. Hourly door prizes, action figures, Magic cards & non-sport cards. Free comic to 1st 25 attendees. Special guests: J.H. Williams III, Mick Gray—both artists of Justice Riders, Starman Ann. #1, Batman LOTOK #s 86-88 & Green Lantern #80). For more information please contact: Jeff Harper @ 330-499-6056 or e-mail: JeffHarpro@aol.com.

MARCH 9, DAYTON

JUBILEE'S COMIC BOOK, TOYS AND NON-SPORTS CARD SHOW, Holiday Inn (Dayton Mall) I-75 exit 44, Miamisburg. table $60 each, 2 or more $50 each, $3.50 admission. MENTION THIS WIZARD AD and RECEIVE 50 CENTS OFF THE REGULAR PRICE, 10am-4pm. Dealers will be selling comics, toys, non-sports cards and comic related items. Activities include: 1st 25 people in line will get into the show for $2. Art contest (art drawn at show), cash, prizes and door prize drawings. For information or dealer tables contact: Gayle R. Huey @ 301-292-4587 or Fax 301-203-0159 (ASK FOR OUR FREE CONVENTION CALENDAR).

MARCH 9, YOUNGSTOWN

YOUNGSTOWN-WARREN COMIC CON, Holiday Inn Metroplex, I-80 & Rt. 193 (exit 229) Belmont Ave. 28 tables @ $45 each, $2 admission, children 6 & under FREE. 10am-4pm. Hourly door prizes, action figures, Magic cards. Free comic to 1st 25 attendees. For more information please contact: Jeff Harper @ 330-499-6056 or e-mail: JeffHarpro@AOL.com.

OREGON

FEBRUARY 22, PORTLAND

PORTLAND COMIC BOOK SHOW #46 Rose Garden Complex in exhibit hall of Memorial Coliseum. 200 tables @ $3.00 each, $4 admission, 10am-5pm. Star Wars creators: Andy Mangels, writer Boba Fett, Brandon McKinney, artist "Star Wars" Big Little Books, Killian Plunkett, Artist Droids, Shadows of the Empire, Steve Perry (writer Shadows of the Empire Paperback), Chris Rush (writer New Rebellion). Celebrate Diversity creators: Art Adams (Monkeyman & O'Brien), Brent Anderson (Kurt Busiek's Astro City), Donna Barr (Desert Peach), Kurt Busiek (Kurt Busiek's Astro City), Paul Chadwick (Concrete), Randy Emberlin (Ghost), Michael Eury (Adv. of the Mask), Phil Foglio (XXXenophile), Michael Gilbert (Mr. Monster), Roberta Gregory (Naughty Bits), Jeff Mariotte (Hazard), Ken Meyer (Calibrations), Steve Oliff (Spawn Colorist), James Owen (Starchild), Larry Stroman (Tribe). Second Genesis 503-788-1031.

PENNSYLVANIA

FEBRUARY 8, PHILADELPHIA

COMIC-CON, Holiday Inn, 4th and Arch Streets. 44 tables @ $65 each or 2/$120. $3.50

admission (mention this Wizard ad for $1 off anyone in your party!). 10am-4pm. Come to the Philadelphia areas best show with great door prizes every hour starting at 11am and a $100 in show cash (good for any merchandise at the show) given away at 3pm. Dealers from 5 states selling, trading and buying comics, non-sports cards, figures and videos from the 940s to present-day. Two to four special guests to be announced, so call the weekend of the show for the latest list or check with your local comic shop a week before the show. Contact: Derek Woywood of Collectors Comics @ 609-782-08 7

FEBRUARY 22-23, PHILADELPHIA

COMIC BOOK, SPORTS CARD, NON-SPORTS CARD & COLLECTIBLES CONVENTION, NE Phila National Guard Armory, Roosevelt Blvd. & Southhampton Rd (one mile South of exit 28 off the PA Turnpike). 166 8-ft. tables @ $ 35 each or 2 @ $250, FREE admission, 10am-5pm both days. Featuring toys, memorabilia, etc. Dealers from 15 states. Comic artists to be announced. For more information contact: Neil Poppel @ 215-579-0731

FEBRUARY 23, PITTSBURGH

THREE RIVERS COMIC & NON-SPORTS CARD CONVENTION. Holiday Inn Greentree. 401 Holiday Dr., I-279 at exit 4 off Mansfield Ave. 40 tables @ $45 each, $2 admission, children 6 & under FREE. 10am-4pm. Hourly door prizes, action figures, Magic cards. Free comic to 1st 25 attendees. For more information please contact Jeff Harper @ 330-499-6056 or e-mail JeffHarpro@AOL.com

APRIL 18-20, MONROEVILLE

1997 PITTSBURGH COMICON. admiss on $10/day, or $25/ three day pass. Tournaments: Star Wars, Marvel OverPower, AD&D and Magic the Gathering (2500.00). Panel discussions, charity auctions, all ages charity casino night. Guests include: Rob Liefeld, Brian Pulido, Steven Hughes, Jason Jensen, Justiniano, Michael Turner, David Wohl, D-Tron, Everette Hartsoe, Carmen Electra, Charles Vess, Louis Small, Jr., Mike Heisler, Dennis Heisler, Rob Prior, Ed Beard, Jr., Brom, Keith Parkinson, Wrightson, TSR, Top Cow, Decipher, Chaos, Diamond, Maximum Press. For more information call 814-467-4116, fax 814-467-44 6 or write Pittsburgh Comicon, 1002 Graham Ave., Windber, PA 5963

TENNESSEE

FEBRUARY 7-8, COOKEVILLE

PARADISE SHOW PROMOTIONS PRESENTS, Cookeville Mall exit 287. 50 8-ft. tables @ $75 each or $50 each additional. Mall hours. Something for everyone, lots of family fun, plenty of hard to find collectibles. Barbies, Star Wars, Star Trek, Sports Cards, Comics, Non-Sports Cards, Racing Collectibles, Toys, Posters and Disney items. For dealer and show information contact: James Vaughn @ 423-577-9825 or Scott Mayes @ 423-483-3831. This is another Paradise Show Promotion. DON'T MISS IT! BE THERE!

FEBRUARY 15, KNOXVILLE

THE KNOXVILLE COMIC CON, Ramada Inn, Cedar Bluff Road. Call for dealer table booking, $2 admission, 10am-5pm, Lots of Comics, Cards, Magic cards, Action Figures, Star Wars, Star Trek and X-Files. Sci-Fi Collectibles and toys. Door prizes every 1/2 hour and special gift to first 25 people through the door. For more information contact: Steve @ 423-933-9820

TEXAS

FEBRUARY 2, AUSTIN

COMIC AND CARD CONVENTION. Four Points Sheraton North, 7800 North IH-35 at Hwy 183. 35 tables @ $55 each, $2 admission. 10am-5pm. Door prize drawings every 30 minutes with a $100 spending spree at 4:30pm. Show us your Wizard and receive a free pack of comic cards with paid admission. Contact: Mark Hlavinka @ 713-293-8676

FEBRUARY 8, HOUSTON

COMIC AND CARD CONVENTION. Hilton Southwest Hotel, 6780 Southwest Frwy. exit Hillcraft. 30 tables @ $70 each, $2 admission, 9:30am-4pm. Door prize drawings every 30 minutes with a $100 spending spree at 3:30pm. Show us your Wizard and receive a free pack of comic cards with paid admission. Contact: Mark Hlavinka @ 713-293-8676.

FEBRUARY 9, SAN ANTONIO

COMIC AND CARD CONVENTION. Embassy Suites Hotel, I-10W at 410 West behind Malibu. 25 tables @ $55 each, $ 50 admission. 9:30am-4pm. Door prize drawings every 30 minutes with a $75 spending spree at 3:30pm. Show us your Wizard and receive a free pack of comic cards with paid admission. Contact: Mark Hlavinka @ 713-293-8676.

FEBRUARY 16, HOUSTON

COMIC AND CARD CONVENTION, Holiday Inn Select, Park 10 West, I-10 W at Hwy 6 across from Sam's. 50 tables @ $70 each. $2 admission, 10am-5pm. Door prize drawings every 30 minutes with a $100 spending spree at 4:30pm. Show us your Wizard and receive a free pack of comic cards with paid admission. Contact: Mark Hlavinka @ 713-293-8676

FEBRUARY 22, HOUSTON

COMIC AND CARD CONVENTION, Holiday Inn Hobby Airport, 9100 Gulf Frwy., I-45S exit College Airport. 40 tables @ $65 each, $2 admission, 9:30am-4pm. Door prize drawings every 30 minutes with a $100 spending spree at 3:30pm. Show us your Wizard and receive a free pack of comic cards with paid admission. Contact: Mark Hlavinka @ 713-293-8676.

MARCH 2, TYLER

EAST TEXAS TOY SHOW, Holiday Inn, 3310 Troup Hwy. 10am-5pm. Action Figures, Comics, Sports Cards, Star Wars, Star Trek, Barbie, G.I. Joe, DC, Die-cast, McDonald's Toys, new vintage toys, etc. Door prizes. For more information please call 903-675-4670

APRIL 5-6, MESQUITE

DALLAS COLLECTORS CONVENTION "The Southwest's Largest Comic Book Convention," Big Town Convention Center, I-20 at Big Town Blvd. 175 tables @ $150 each call for availability. $7 admission per day, $10 for both days, tickets at the door, children 7 and under FREE with paid adult. Saturday 10am-7pm, Sunday, 1 am-5pm. Special guest: Stan "The Man" Lee, Mastermind of Marvel's Explosive Silver Age, featuring national dealers specializing in comics—Golden age to present, toys, non-sports cards, art, Star Wars and more. For more information contact James Mayfield @ 972-530-2486.

VIRGINIA

FEBRUARY 16, FAIR OAKS

JUB LEE'S COMIC BOOK, TOYS & NON-SPORTS CARD SHOW, Holiday Inn (Fair Oaks) 787 Lee Jackson Hwy (RT 50) 1 table $60 each, 2 or more $50 each, $3.50 admission. MENTION THIS WIZARD AD and RECEIVE 50 CENTS OFF THE REGULAR PRICE. 10am-4pm. Dealers will be selling comics, toys, non-sports cards and comic related items. Activities include: 1st 25 people in line will get into the show for $2. Art contest (art drawn at show), cash, prizes and door prize drawings. For information or dealer tables contact: Gayle R. Huey @ 30 - 292-4587 or Fax 30 203-0 59 (ASK FOR OUR FREE CONVENTION CALENDAR)

MARCH 2, MCLEAN

CAPITAL ASSOCIATES' TYSONS CORNER MONTHLY COMIC BOOK AND TRADING CARD SHOW, Tysons Corner Westpark Hotel, 8401 Westpark Drive, take exit 10 (Route 7 West) off I-495. 1-1/2 miles west on Route 7 and the hotel is on the right, just past Route 7 and Route 23 Intersections, 703-734-2800. 90 tables @ $65 1st table. $60 2nd table, $55 each additional table, 10am-4pm, $2 admission, children under 5 FREE. Guests. Call for updated list. Contact: Jeffrey Scott Rocen @ 703-912-1993

Places to Go

[You're used to seeing Shows and Conventions listed here, but now WIZARD will provide you with other locations where you can find comic related items. WIZARD recommends planning ahead before you seek out any of these locations—because sometimes stuff happens before we go to press. And so my friends, we bid you all adios and happy hunt'n'it!]

TEXAS

EVERY WEEKEND IN FEBRUARY, SAN ANTONIO

COLLECTORS CITY! 6800 Huebner. 8ft tables @ $20 per table per day (TABLES COME WITH PEGBOARD WALLS). Dealers save money with our low rates. Free Admission. 15,000 sq. ft of all your favorite collectibles. Comics (New and Old), Action Figures, Starting Lineups, Barbies, Hot Wheels, G.I. Joes, Sports Cards, Magic Cards, Movie Posters, Video Sales, Rental of Manga, Sci-Fi and more all under one roof. Magic Tournaments every weekend. Large selection of Star Wars, Star Trek and X-Files collectibles. COLLECTORS CITY, a one stop shopping experience for all your favorite collectibles. Contact: COLLECTORS CITY @ 210-681-4977

FEBRUARY (VALENTINE'S MONTH SPECIAL) EVENTS, SAN ANTONIO

HEROES & FANTASIES. Valentine's Day weekend sale for couples! Buy 2 get 1 FREE on Feb. 14-16. Applies to back issue comics, single sports cards, Magic singles (& other CCGs), Action Figures, T-Shirts. At all six Heroes & Fantasies Locations: 6780 Ingram Rd.(in Ingram Square), 226 West Bitters Rd.(in Embassy Oaks), 7103 Blanco Road (at Loop 410), 2359 Austin Hwy (at Perrin-Beitel), 8407 Bandera Road (Bandera Festival), 914 East Pat Booker Rd (Universal City).

If you'd like to use Wizard's magic to help advertise your comic book event, call Karen Evora at (914) 268-3907

WIZARD #68

PRESENTS

NEW SUPERMAN COSTUME
COVER AND FREE POSTER!

FREE DARKNESS HOLOCHROME CARD

OR get the X-MAN cover

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DV8 ™ & © Aegis Entertainment, Inc., dba Wildstorm Productions, Inc.

BULL PEN

Former Mort of the Month Balloon Buster welcomes you to the Miscellaneous *Wizard* Fun Section

C.B.I.Q.

comic book intelligence quotient

Smell that? With Valentine's Day upon us, that be love you catching a whiff of in the air. With that in mind, we'll be grading your comic knowledge against the 5 "I" perks involved in being a fanboy in love with comics.

Score	Rank
0-4	Knowing that our comic collections are worth millions and we'll be able to retire on one no matter what anybody says, dammit!
5-14	Giggling knowingly at comic in-jokes (like the line "The circus must be halfway to Metropolis by now." in "Batman Forever") while they just go over most people's heads. We're like, cool.
15-19	Unlike real-life women, comic Bad Girls don't threaten to call the cops when we get close to them while they're nekkid and glistening with baby oil.
20	Thanks to reading old issues of *X-Men*, we know how to yell stuff in different languages like "Mein Gott!" "Boshe Moi!" and "Crikey!"

1. Before Kyle Rayner a.k.a. Green Lantern, started dating Donna Troy, he had a girlfriend named Alex. What happened to her?

A) She couldn't deal with the fact that he was ruining his life every day, so she dumped him.

B) She left him for Wally West, a.k.a. the Flash.

C) She was killed by Major Force and stuffed into Kyle's refrigerator.

D) She turned out to be a construct created by the power of Sinestro's power ring.

2. Pretty-boy Jack Hart is better known as what superpowered character?

A) Jack of Hearts
B) Blackjack
C) Heart Breaker
D) The Jacker

3. What did Nightcrawler once give his sweetie Amanda Sefton to "protect her when he's not around"?

A) an android duplicate of himself from the Danger Room
B) a wrist-worn forcefield projector made from Shi'ar technology
C) a stuffed doll of himself called a "Bamf"
D) Big Jim Slade, former NFL fullback with an eye for trouble

4. Which of the following characters was so obsessed with Spider-Man that (s)he committed crimes just to be chased by him, and also built a rather disturbing shrine in his honor?

A) Silver Sable
B) the Black Cat
C) Spider-Woman
D) Big Jim Slade, former NFL fullback with an eye for trouble

5. By what cosmic boot-licking name did Colossus go by when he was once under the mind control of Arcade?

A) Comrade Steel
B) The Proletarian
C) The Supreme Soviet
D) The Iron Curtain

6. Which of the following books on the life of a superhero was not seen in a bookstore window as the good reverend Norman McCay walked to Planet Krypton in issue #1 of *Kingdom Come*?

A) *Alternate Egos* by John Law
B) *Behind the Mask* by Jessie Chambers
C) *Under the Hood* by Hollis Mason
D) *What I'm Talkin' About* by Todd Bridges

7. How does Batman's psychotic enemy, Two-Face, make decisions?

A) He flips a two-headed coin. If the scratched side comes up, he does something evil. If the clean side comes up, he does the moral thing.

B) He asks his intended victim a trick question on ethics and follows his evil intents if they answer unethically.

C) He rolls a die made of human bone; evens they live, odds they die.

D) He puts on Pepe and Luis, his two sock puppets, and he lets them debate over what should be done until one wins the argument. Then he eats them.

8. Why did Luke Cage, Power Man, take over for the Thing in the Fantastic Four, for a few issues in the 1970s?

A) The Thing was recuperating from injuries he received at the hands of Annihilus and Blastaar.

B) The rest of the FF thought he was dead and hired Power Man as his replacement.

C) The Thing lost his powers and was thus useless as a superhero.

D) Two words: the trois.

9. Who is Spawn the Impaler?

A) Vlad, despot tyrant of Wallachia
B) ex-covert operative Al Simmons
C) an unknown medieval knight
D) a time-displaced Chupacabra

10. What government agent came to take Professor Xavier away in *X-Men* #57?

A) Larry Trask
B) Bastion
C) Val Cooper
D) Peter Henry Gyrich

11. Remember Aquaboy? Well, he's all grown up now, and goes by the name of...

A) Aquaman II.
B) Tempest.
C) Typhoon
D) Captain Squid.

12. Which arch-enemy did Batman recently have to team up with to stop Ra's Al Ghul's disease from being released in Calcutta?

A) Lady Shiva
B) The Joker
C) Azrael
D) Bane

13. What name did the Invaders go by after World War II?

A) the Liberty Legion
B) the All-Star Squadron
C) the All-Winners Squad
D) H.A.S.B.E.E.N.S. (Heroes Administrating Severe Beatings to Ex-Employees of Nazi Squadrons)

15. Who was the cause of the most recent incarnation of the JLA?

A) Dr. Destiny
B) Know Man
C) the Legion of Doom
D) the Injustice

16. When Matt Murdock was supposedly dead, what name did that crafty bastard, Daredevil, use as a secret identity?

A) Jack Battlin
B) Foggy Nelson
C) Jake Lockley
D) Murdock Matthews

17. Who created the Avengers' wacky android, the Vision?

A) Ultron
B) The Torch (no, not Johnny Storm; the android guy from the Fantastic Four)
C) Prof. Phineas Horton
D) The Kree

18. To turn back into his regular teenage geek form, what must Ninjak say?

A) "I call on the power of... Ninjak!"
B) "Ninjak forever!"
C) "Ninjak will return!"
D) "I wonder if my series will make it to issue #9?"

19. The Gen[13] kids currently attend which university?

A) University of San Diego
B) UCLA
C) Texas A & M
D) Virginia T & A

20. Why the hell is Lady Rawhide so pissed at Zorro?

A) She blames him for her brother's blindness, caused by gunfire when someone mistook her bro for Zorro.

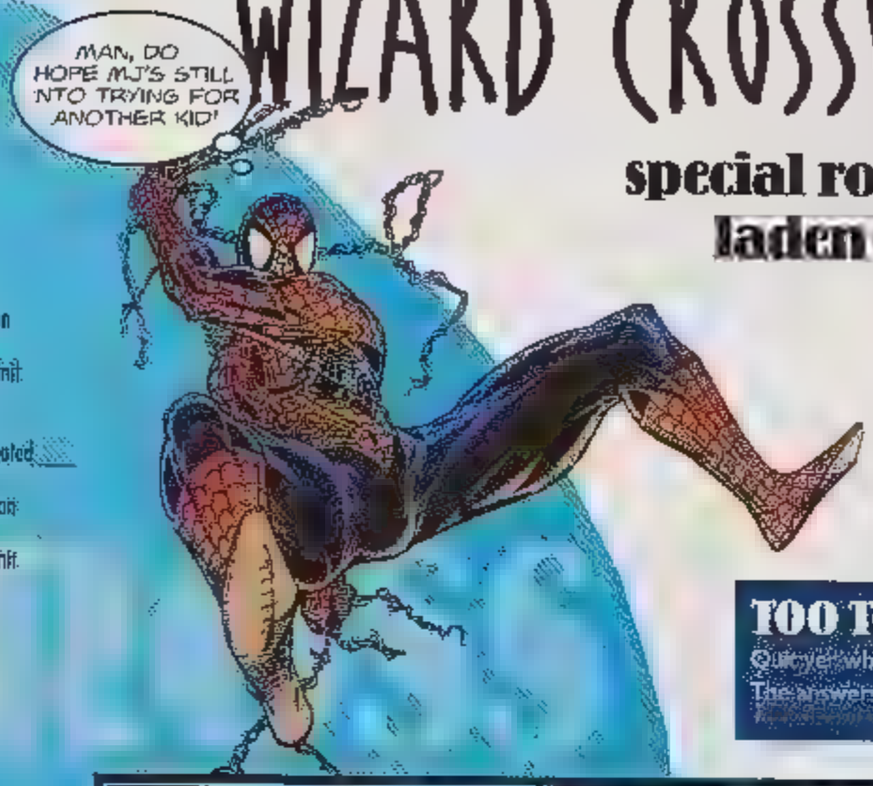
B) She threw herself at Zorro, who refused her love, and now she wants him dead for "insulting" her.

C) Zorro accidently killed her father, a ruthless Spanish soldier.

D) She's a chick and, you know, chicks just get moody.

WIZARD CROSSWORD

special romance-laden edition



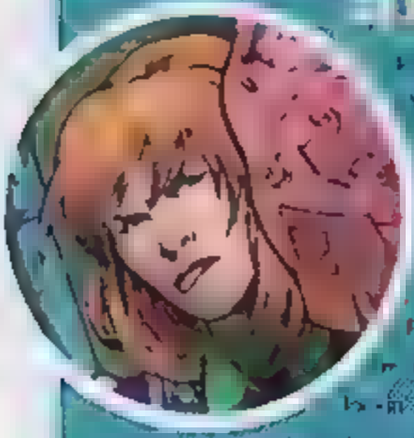
TOO TOUGH?
Quicker whatin'
The Answers are on page 196.

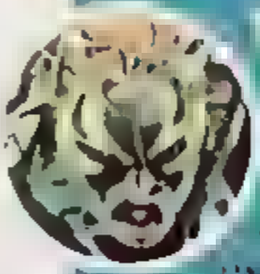
1. Dolo's cat
5. Space or Rider
9. Love's Tr[illegible]lby
11. Big Bonds's bobby Scott, initials
13. Hulk's cannibal foe
15. Joker's favorite word
18. was Guy Gardner's flame
19. Zorro's redhead babe
21. Marvel or Tree
22. DC's beastly Logan
23. Kid Avenger's partner
25. What Ulik is
28. Hero of Wildchild's heart
29. Vindicator's metal boyfriend
30. plays "Star Trek"'s resident Klingon
31. *Ninja High School* creator, init.
34. legendary Wonder Woman artist, init.
36. Witchblade foe, ____ Bottingham
38. Superman's power source
39. Sue Dibny's stretchy spouse, Elongated ____
40. married Skywalker's sister
41. Bruce Banner's shrink, ____ Samson
43. scarred madman who loves Joe
47. reunited Sharon Carter and Cap, init.
49. snake-hating ork raider, init.
50. What Woodgod looked like
51. *Love & Rockets* co-creator, init.
52. Brainy Ant-Man foe
53. Superman's wedding costume
55. "Phasers ____ stun!"
56. comic book sound effect
57. Knight or Skull
59. X-Force strongman
64. "Bite ____, Fanboy"
65. gave Cerebus a girlfriend, init.
67. "____ before Zod!"
69. Sam Francisco's movie, init.
70. hero of "a thousand faces," init.
71. Alien Bongo comic
73. DC artist John Paul ____
75. *Preacher* character has face like this
76. L.E.G.I.O.N. Member Captain ____
78. 59 across, ethnicity, abbrev.
80. Sara Pezzini
82. Marvel's temporal administration, init.
85. What the Thing did for the UCWF
86. one of Donna Troy's other names

1. what 46 down does well
2. Bond has big ones
3. Capt. Riker, Number ____
4. Bugs Bunny's down-under pal, init.
5. Killed Gwen Stacy, init.
6. 5 down's son, init.
7. Youngblood leader
8. Bill's *Mirror World* writer ____ Williams
10. Julia Carpenter's nickname
12. The Multiple Man
14. Banshee's homeland
16. Big Ninjak foe
17. Captain Marvel weapons
20. Buzz Lightyear's pal
23. Krusty the ____
24. Mr. Hyde's partner
26. Namorita's main squeeze, init.
27. ____ of Super-Heroes
32. Mickey Spillane's Mike ____
33. *Bionic* characters' boss
35. Leave it to ____
37. WWI pilot, Enemy ____
39. Scotty's first name
42. Armored Ultra
44. "____, you just hit the jackpot!"
45. Bobby Drake
46. hooked up with Dolphin
48. Paradox Press little, powerful dino
49. "The Wizard of ____"
53. *The Dreaming* writer, init.
54. brought Rogue and Gambit together
58. Ant-Man's daughter
60. ____ *Access*
61. married to Supermom Martha, init.
62. Vertigo book with cannibal family, init.
63. Magneto and Ant-Man wear one
66. Scarecrow is full of this
68. writes about Reed/Sue/Namor triangle
72. the Main Man
74. Aunt May had a thing for this Octopus
76. had crush on Spidey, Black ____
77. Arsenal used to do this
79. married a female Skrull, init.
80. Sasquatch, init
81. Created 54 down, init.
83. SH shrinker
84. Tony Stark's *other* group

TOP 10 HEROES & VILLAINS OF THE MONTH

This list doesn't track the number of copies which a specific character sells each month. It doesn't pay attention to any kind of sales meter. This list is a roster of the 10 comic book characters with the strongest fan following—nothing more, nothing less.





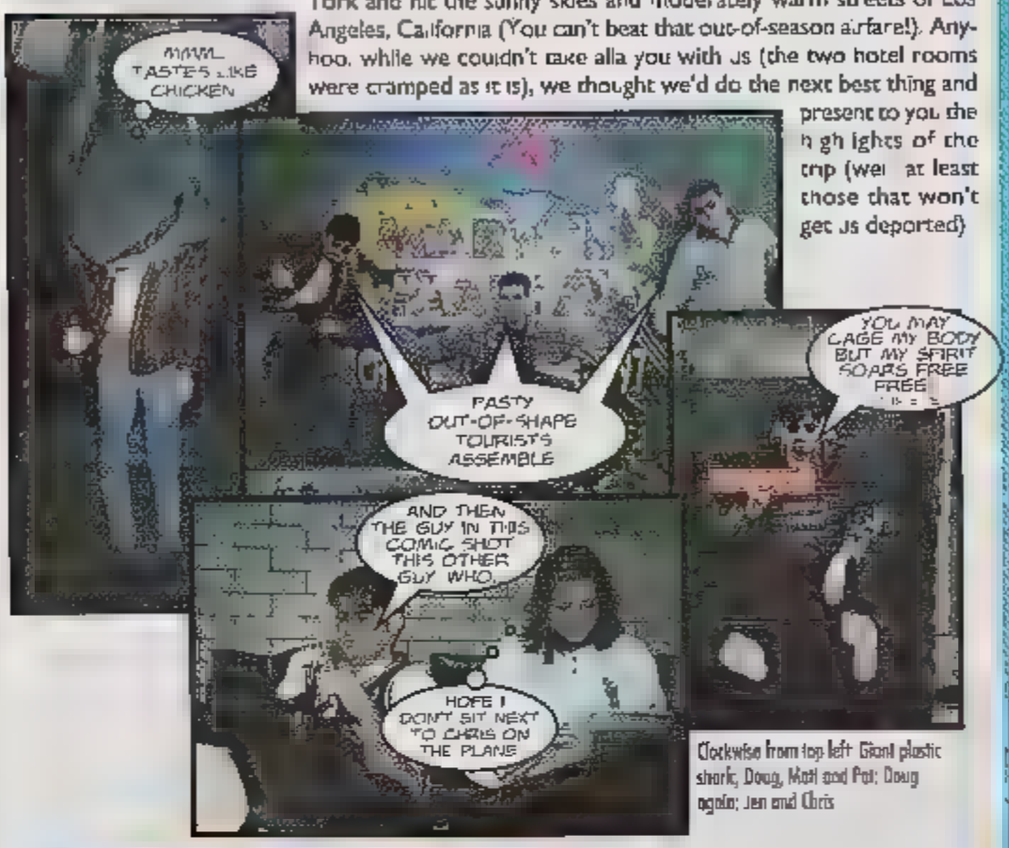
MORT OF THE MONTH

Now it's time to look at the lowest character of the month, or, as we like to call 'em, the Mort of the Month!

BULL•PEN

Going to California

Taking a much-needed break, Wizard staffers Pat McCallum, Doug Goldstein, Matt Senreich, Jen Cavallo and Chris Duncan (along with various assorted buddies) bade farewell to snow-swept New York and hit the sunny skies and moderately warm streets of Los Angeles, California (You can't beat that out-of-season airfare!). Anyhoo, while we couldn't take alla you with us (the two hotel rooms were cramped as it is), we thought we'd do the next best thing and present to you the highlights of the trip (well, at least those that won't get us deported).



Clockwise from top left: Giant plastic shark; Doug, Matt and Pat; Doug again; Jen and Chris

One of the Damned

Buddy Scalera

Online Editor, *Wizard Press*

What is it you do at *Wizard*?
I created and manage the Wizard World forum on AOL. Plus, I eat all the junk food nobody else wants.

Your favorite section in *Wizard*?
"Bullpen." Before I worked here, I thought that stuff was made up, but it's not. (The men's room really is a scary place.)

Favorite movies?
"Pulp Fiction" and "Clerks."

Favorite book?
Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas, by Hunter S. Thompson.

Favorite TV shows?
"The X-Files" and "Politically Incorrect."

Who would play you in a movie?
An overweight Kirk Cameron.

Most frightening *Wizard* moment?
My first day of work. In an office shared with Marc Wilkofsky and Andrew Kordon, I had a desk facing a wall, no phone, no computer and, being the new guy, I got a broken chair. And, thanks to the crappy radio reception, static-filled morning talk shows. I almost didn't make it through the day.

Favorite musical performers?
Pearl Jam and Kiss.

Favorite comics right now?
Concrete, *Jinx*, *Strangers in Paradise* and *Barry Windsor-Smith: Storyteller*.

What hobbies or outside interests do you have?
A couple of *Wizard* staffers and I do a TV show called "ComixVision."

What superpower would you want, and why?
I'd like to be able to eat all I want and not gain weight. Nutter Butters... mmm.

Illustration by Jim Geiger

WIZARD TOP TEN

Top 10 things Wizard folk learned during our trip

10. Sometimes, if you're not really careful, some chicks turn out to be guys.
9. Sometimes, even when you're really careful, some chicks turn out to be guys.
8. Getting into Mexico is a lot easier than getting out of Mexico.
7. The "Excuse me, officer, can I try on your hat?" line doesn't go over too well there, either.
6. Those new #@%Sing Star Wars figures are just as hard to find out there as they are over here.
5. You can't eat three fish tacos and go on a roller coaster right after. (Actually, you can; you just shouldn't.)
4. When somebody volunteers to rub lotion onto your back, make sure they're rubbing *lotion* onto your back.
3. Never get involved in a land war in Asia or go up against a Sicilian when death is on the line.
2. Don't overdue it when you swipe stuff from the hotel. They come get you.
1. When it's a rent-a-car, who cares?

CONTEST WINNERS

Here's a look at the winning **ASTRO CITY** entry (issue #61) — the Astro City High School, by Sara Hartley of Los Angeles, Calif.!

WITCHBLADE, *Wizard* #63: Ellen Peacock, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

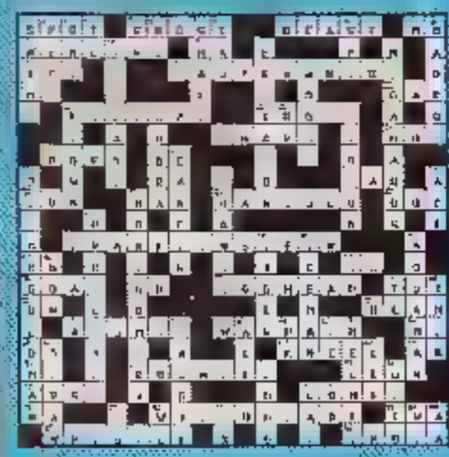
C.B.I.Q. answers...

from page 194

1. C	5. B	9. A	13. C	18. B
2. A	6. D	10. C	15. B	19. B
3. C	7. A	11. B	16. A	20. A
4. B	8. C	12. A	17. A	

CROSSWORD answers...

from page 195



RON MARZ

GUEST COLUMN

FANS UPSET WITH CHARACTER CHANGES NEED TO KEEP THINGS IN PERSPECTIVE

Gee, I wonder why they asked *me* to write this one. Something to do with that whole Green Lantern/Hal Jordan thing maybe?

When I was tabbed as the new writer of *Green Lantern* in 1994, the plan called for getting rid of Hal Jordan as Green Lantern in favor of a younger ring-slinger. This was envisioned as something different from the "death" of Superman or the breaking of Batman—this was permanent.

And boy, did we piss off a fair share of old-time readers in the process.

Even though it was a decision originating in DC editorial, it was my name in the credits. And even though I had a fondness for Hal's character, after some initial misgivings, I believed the new direction was the right decision. So I was perfectly willing to stand up and take my share of the expected heat. It was just the intensity of the heat that was unexpected.

I've always regarded change as good, as necessary. Without change, especially in a creative realm, we stagnate. But some fans didn't want change. Their attachment to Hal was passionate, to say the least. They took Hal's fate personally, like he was a member of the family. I was surprised at such a volatile reaction to something that...well, wasn't real. Despite the "new" Green Lantern's success, the outcry never quiets in some quarters: bring back Hal, get rid of Marz, fire the editor.

Angering readers isn't necessarily a bad thing. You're pressing the audience's buttons, generating an emotional response because of something you simply made up. That's one of the greatest satisfactions a writer can have. It means you've done your job; you've made people care.

I'd rather be vilified than ignored, but I've never written anything to *intentionally* anger readers. That's true for *Green Lantern* or any of the other books I've written. The choices I make are dictated by my story sense, my views of what makes good drama and what I think best serves the characters. And yes, sometimes those choices anger fans.

So how do you deal with them? Generally, I and most other creators *don't*. This isn't like playing for the Yankees, where fans can voice their displeasure over your latest batting slump because they come to your place of work. There aren't any jeering crowds in my office. Other than infrequent online exchanges and occasional convention appearances, there's not a great deal of direct fan interaction. Those instances where I have had an exchange with an irate fan, I've had to explain why I did what I did. And in a lot of cases, the explanation falls on deaf ears. Incensed readers don't want an intelligent discussion, they want you to fall on your knees, admit the error of your ways and beg forgiveness. You can't win. And you can't allow yourself to be swayed by what the readers want; you can't prostitute your craft.

Ultimately, what it all means is...nothing. In the larger scheme of things, what I or anybody else in this industry does is diversion. It's entertainment, and with few exceptions, that's all it is. Once in a while, a *Dark Knight Returns* or a *From Hell* or a *Maus* is created, and we can all be proud. But first and foremost, comics aspire to give readers a 20-minute ride. Our art form is designed to entertain, and as such, it pales in comparison to real-world concerns. AIDS. Rain forest depletion. The homeless. Animal cruelty. Pick your cause.

My point here is that *those* are the things that should anger us or fire our passions, not the "lives" of comic book heroes. I don't mean to say comics are meaningless. Every day I pursue my profession with as much energy and enthusiasm as I can muster. The fans pursue their hobby with a zeal that should flatter those of us lucky enough to be creators. But we shouldn't lose perspective. We shouldn't let comics take the place of the things that matter.

If a book consistently angers or fails to entertain you, you don't have to read it. If you don't like *Green Lantern*, though I hope you do, there are worse things you can do with the $1.75 than give it to a homeless shelter. If you don't like what *Captain America* has turned into (get in line), give your $1.95 to a soup kitchen.

Don't lose sight of what's really important. W

Ron Marz is the writer of Green Lantern *and* Superboy, *both for DC Comics.*

Marz had the task of making the "old" Green Lantern into a villain (left)

WIZARD profile

Here's looking at...

MARK OAKLEY

When Mark Oakley was in college, he was struggling for a direction. What the 26-year-old creator of the self-published hit *Thieves & Kings* did not count on was an enlightened teacher showing him the door. "He asked me why I was here," recalls the Toronto-based Oakley. "He knew I wasn't interested in what they were teaching. He suggested I leave college, get a part-time job and just live this dream I had. I said, 'Damn! He's right! I'm out of here!' "

Thieves & Kings, which chronicles young thief Rubel's adventures in a world populated by kings, pirates and princesses, is a spirited, unconventional book that mirrors Oakley's independent, creative stance. "I always liked fantasy and I always had a desire to depict a being at war with the establishment. It was that whole 'I am not a number, I am a free man' thing."

Adding to the "fairy tale" notion, *Thieves & Kings* contains some blocks of text with surrounding illustrations. Oakley's reason for this unique style is threefold. "I can tell a lot more story in a lot less space. I like to just go with the story and let it take me where it will. And you've got to admit, it's a great gimmick," he laughs.

Oakley, born and raised in Montreal, Canada, began drawing at the age of five, "when I discovered the motor skills necessary to pick up a pencil," and later saw his still vague artistic journey leaning in the direction of book and album covers. After a summer job at a local animation company, the aforementioned six-month gig at Sheridan College in Montreal and a three-year period selling lottery tickets and fixing lawnmowers to make the rent, Oakley finally saw the light.

"I had never really been into comics, but I had become real passionate about pictures and storytelling, and comics seemed like the way to go when it came to presenting those kinds of ideas."

Oakley's free man attitude manifested itself in forming I Box Publishing, as the self-publishing launching pad for *Thieves & Kings*. "I was terrified to get into self-publishing," he admits. "But I felt this had to work, or I'd end up under a train or bus—I couldn't do anything else. With that in mind, I was going to make damned sure it worked."

Thieves & Kings did work, as the bimonthly series is currently on issue #15. Oakley is proud of the fact that his book not only pays the bills, but has fielded a number of animation and distribution offers. All of which Oakley, given his artistic streak, has so far turned down. "I believe in accountability and responsibility. You've got to bind yourself to the work heart and soul; otherwise it doesn't mean anything."

by Marc Shapiro

First comic read...
Dennis the Menace. I learned how to read on those books.

Favorite comic of all time...
Nausicaä of the Valley of Wind. I liked that book's philosophy of life and how to live it.

Favorite work of your own...
Thieves & Kings, because it embodies all the goals I've set for myself in life. It's more than just a comic for me.

Superpower you would most want...
Instant recall of any information

Comics you currently read...
Astro City, *Beanworld*

Favorite munchie at 2 a.m...
Popcorn

Favorite toy as a kid and as an adult...
As a kid, it was Legos. As an adult, my Star Wars lightsaber.

Things you collect...
All kinds of brushes, pens and art supplies

Person you would most want to meet...
"Calvin and Hobbes" creator Bill Watterson

Person who would play you in a movie about yourself...
Robert Downey jr.

Favorite cartoon...
"Battle of the Planets"

Person you would most like to work with...
The late author Joseph Campbell

Favorite musical performer...
Beethoven

Favorite TV show...
"Northern Exposure"

Last good movie you saw...
"The Shawshank Redemption"

Last good book you read...
War and Peace, by Leo Tolstoy

If you had the power of The Beyonder...
I'd make a clone of myself so I could get the work done faster.

Batteries never included.

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He's the prime suspect in a terrifying mystery.
The police are after him and so is the murderer.

EWAN McGREGOR
JOSH BROLIN

PATRICIA ARQUETTE
AND NICK NOLTE

NIGHTWATCH

DIMENSION FILMS presents a MICHAEL OBEL production a BORNEDAL film EWAN McGREGOR PATRICIA ARQUETTE JOSH BROLIN LAUREN GRAHAM and NICK NOLTE "NIGHTWATCH" music by DANIEL LUPI
music by JOACHIM HOLBEK costume designer LOUISE MINGENBACH editor SALLY MENKE production designer RICHARD HOOVER director of photography DAN LAUSSEN, DFF executive producers BOB WEINSTEIN HARVEY WEINSTEIN CARY GRANAT based upon the screenplay by OLE BORNEDAL
DELIVERED: Visit DIMENSION FILMS on the web at: http://www.dimensionfilms.com screenplay by OLE BORNEDAL and STEVEN SODERBERGH produced by MICHAEL OBEL directed by OLE BORNEDAL
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